PB86-112265

Bibliography of Documents Issued by the GAO (General Accounting Office) on Matters Related to: Environmental Protection

(U.S.) General Accounting Office, Washington, DC

Aug 85

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

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Aug 85

PERFORMER: General Accounting Office, Washington, DC.
Resources Community and Economic Development Div.
GAO/RCED-85-154

Protecting the environment by placing limits on the amount of pollution that can be tolerated without endangering the health and welfare of human beings and the ecological systems in which we live is an important issue in public policy decisionmaking. It involves regulatory and financial assistance programs to control and abate hazardous wastes, toxic chemicals, and other pollutants that seep into the nation's water, contaminate the land, and poison the air. Which pollutants and what levels of controls are needed, how to balance environmental protection with other equally desirable national goals, and how to maximize the billions of dollars spent on environmental controls--all represent important national concerns. The bibliography includes information on U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) documents directly or indirectly related to environmental protection released between January 1981 and December 1984. Although the Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division (RCED) is GAO's lead division for reviews of environmental protection, a broad interrelationship exists, ...

KEYWORDS: *Bibliographies, *Environmental surveys, *Hazardous wastes.

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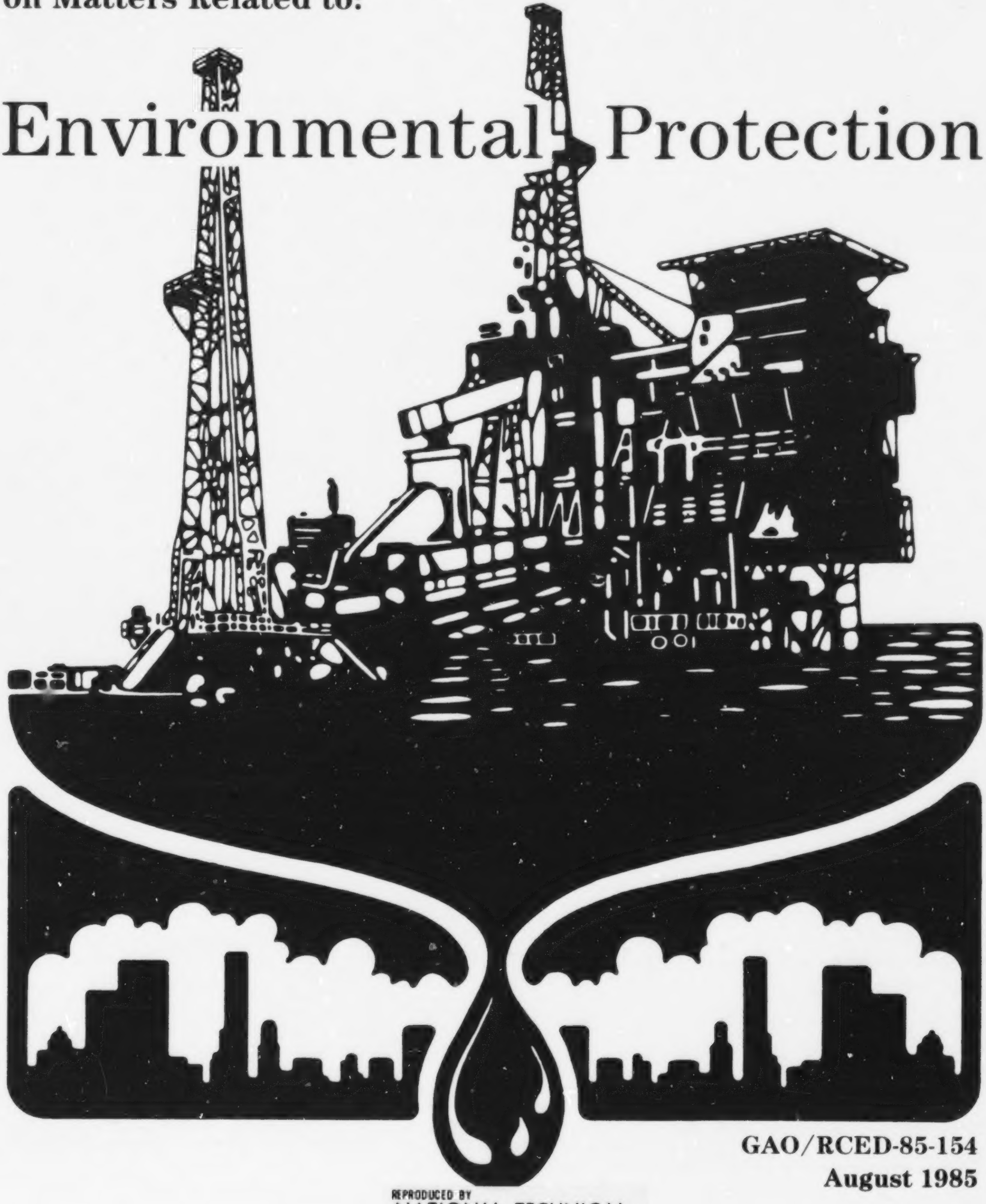
PB86-112265

GAO

United States General Accounting Office

A Bibliography of Documents Issued by the GAO on Matters Related to:

Environmental Protection



GAO/RCED-85-154
August 1985

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A Bibliography of Documents Issued by the GAO on Matters Related to:

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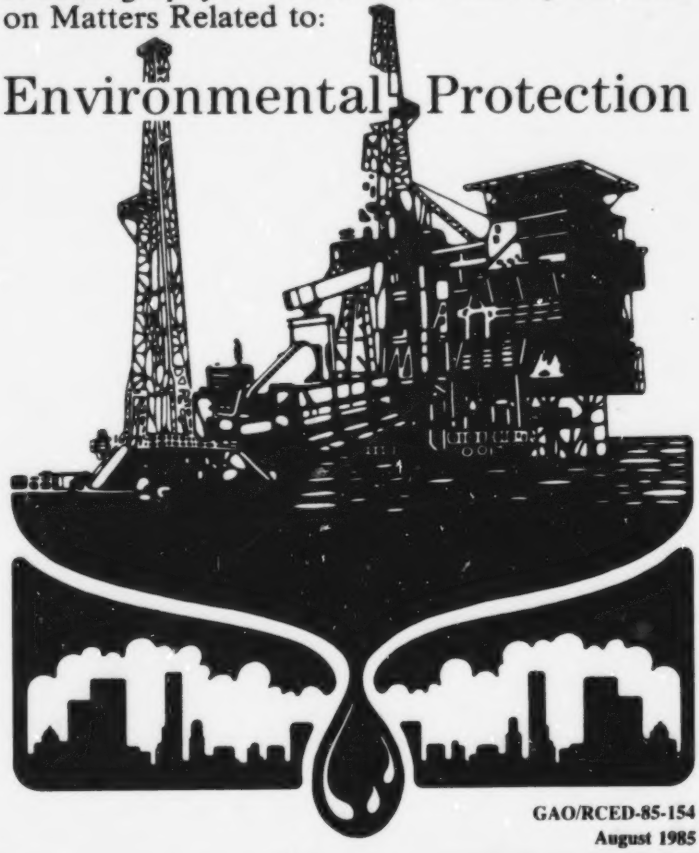

GAO/RCED-85-154
August 1985

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
Washington, D.C. 20548

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U.S. General Accounting Office

Charles A. Bowsher
Comptroller General of the United States

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FOREWORD

Protecting the environment by placing limits on the amount of pollution that can be tolerated without endangering the health and welfare of human beings and the ecological systems in which we live is an important issue in public policy decisionmaking. It involves regulatory and financial assistance programs to control and abate hazardous wastes, toxic chemicals, and other pollutants that seep into the nation's water, contaminate the land, and poison the air. Which pollutants and what levels of controls are needed, how to balance environmental protection with other equally desirable national goals, and how to maximize the billions of dollars spent on environmental controls—all represent important national concerns.

This bibliography includes information on U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) documents directly or indirectly related to environmental protection released between January 1981 and December 1984.

Although the Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division (RCED) is GAO's lead division for reviews of environmental protection, a broad interrelationship exists between the environmental area and other areas of interest addressed by GAO such as health, energy, transportation, agriculture, and natural resources. This bibliography, therefore, includes information on documents issued by other GAO divisions and offices that have linkages to environmental protection issues.

This bibliography should be useful for general information and research purposes and for understanding issues in the environmental protection area that are being addressed by GAO. Questions regarding its contents should be directed to Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, RCED, Room 4073-A, GAO Building, 441 G. Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20548, (202)275-5489. Readers interested in ordering individual documents in the environmental protection or other areas, or in requesting bibliographic searches on a specific topic, should call GAO Document Handling and Information Service (202)275-6241. The cards included in this book also may be used to order documents.

J. Dexter Peach
Director
Resources, Community, and Economic
Development Division

INTRODUCTION

This **Environmental Protection Bibliography** contains citations and abstracts of relevant documents released by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) from January 1981 through December 1984. Included are references to audit reports, staff studies, speeches, testimonies, Comptroller General decisions, and other GAO documents. This bibliography can be used for a variety of purposes, including in-depth research into a specific topic, searching for a particular document, maintaining current awareness, and general browsing.

HOW TO USE THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography is organized in two sections: a CITATION SECTION (white pages) and an INDEX SECTION (yellow pages).

The CITATION SECTION consists of brief descriptions of the documents and often includes an informative abstract. Some or all of the following information is in each citation, as appropriate:

- **Title/Subtitle**
- **Type, date, and pagination**
- **Author or witness**
- **GAO issue areas**
- **Agencies or organizations concerned**
- **Congressional committees, Members of Congress, or agencies to whom the document is specifically relevant**
- **Law and/or related statutory or regulatory authority on which the document is based**
- **GAO contact**

The INDEX SECTION is the key for locating references to related documents cited in this bibliography. The section is comprised of four separate indexes that classify information according to:

Subject

Agency or organization
(Includes both Federal agencies and nongovernmental corporate bodies)

Congressional affiliation
(Includes entries under relevant congressional committees and individual Representatives and Senators)

Document number
(Includes entries arranged by report number and/B-number and date)

Reference from the index entries to the corresponding citations is provided by a unique six-digit accession number assigned to each citation. The accession number should also be used to request copies of the document described in the citation section.

A sample entry is shown opposite page one of the Citation Section and at the beginning of each index.

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CITATION SECTION

SAMPLE CITATION

115081
Better Monitoring Techniques Are Needed To Assess the Quality of Rivers and Streams: Volumes I and II. CED-81-30; B-201374. April 30, 1981. 2 vols. (326 pp.) plus 11 appendices (256 pp.). *Report* to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Interior; Council on Environmental Quality; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey.

Congressional Relevance: Congress.

Authority: 40 C.F.R. 35.1500. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (82 Stat. 904). Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

Abstract: Accurate, reliable data on the actual condition of the nation's rivers and streams are necessary for sound environmental planning and management. Existing national water quality monitoring networks do not provide the type or quality of data needed. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Water quality can change dramatically during 1 day, and within a short distance. Complex interactions among biological, chemical, and physical processes complicate the difficulties of water quality sampling. Infrequent measurements cannot accurately describe water quality, because rivers can change rapidly and extensively. Infrequent sampling also misses important events. Cost has been a major consideration in decisions on sampling frequencies. Each sampling site is affected by unique conditions, and water quality measurements taken at one site cannot normally be applied to other locations, not even those nearby in the same river. The Geological Survey focuses primarily on riverflow, not water quality. Stations are located toward the downstream end of drainage basins. The Survey does not intend to detect any particular category of water quality, water use, or related land use. The Survey, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) have used network data in statistical comparisons of water quality, but these comparisons are highly questionable. The variability of water quality, the limited frequency and locations of samples, and the inconsistency in field work and laboratory performance make it virtually impossible to compare the data meaningfully from month to month, season to season, and year to year. Special studies of water quality designed for individual river areas could overcome many weaknesses inherent in the sampling techniques. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA and the Chairman of CEQ should promote the use of other available indicators of national progress toward cleaner water. The Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of EPA should discontinue the three national water quality networks and shift to a program of special studies of water quality.

Accession Number
Title/Subtitle
(Invented Titles Are Bracketed)
Document Date
Type of Document
GAO Issue Area
Budget Function
(Code Numbers in Parentheses)
Legislative Authority
Abstract
Findings/Conclusions

Document/Report Number
Pagination
Author
Addressee
GAO Contact
Agency/Organization Concerned
Congressional Relevance
Recommendations to Agencies

091108

[The Interstate Transport of Sulfur Dioxide and Total Suspended Particulates]. June 30, 1981. 11 pp. plus 3 attachments (13 pp.).
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; by David L. Jones, Senior Group Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.
Authority: Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977.

091236

Government Regulation of New Technologies and Substances. 1981. 3 pp.
by Jessica Laverty, Attorney-Adviser, GAO Office of the General Counsel.
In The OGC Adviser, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1981, pp. 14-16.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Authority: Administrative Procedure Act. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

114083

Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline Operations: More Federal Monitoring Needed. EMD-81-11; B-199479. January 6, 1981. 56 pp. plus 9 appendices (83 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Nuclear Nonproliferation (1614); Land Use Planning and Control: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2351); Environmental Protection Programs: U.S. Promotion of Worldwide Pollution Abatement Actions (2254).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of Energy; Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.; Bureau of Land Management; Bureau of Land Management: Office of Special Projects; Office of Management and Budget.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Oversight and Special Investigations Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs; Congress.
Authority: 49 C.F.R. 195. P.L. 93-153.
Abstract: To see how well the pipeline monitoring of both pipeline and environmental integrity is being carried out, GAO evaluated several technical and environmental stipulations imposed on the operating company as conditions for the pipeline's right-of-way across federal lands. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The operating company has deviated from various technical requirements designed to prevent or detect oil leaks, and corrective action has not always been taken. GAO also found that: (1) the company is not complying with the stipulation for a system that would detect pipeline settling and thus provide an early warning leak prevention system; (2) it has not run internal corrosion pitting surveys as frequently as required in the approved corrosion control plan; (3) the line volume balance leak detection method is not operating at the sensitivity specified in the approved design; (4) the effectiveness of the earthquake-monitoring system has not been thoroughly evaluated by the agency; and (5) the monitoring office of the agency is experiencing difficulty in staffing because of executive branch hiring limitations imposed to cut costs and the agency's deemphasis on the use of consultants. Since applicable costs are charged to the operating company, these hiring limitations are unnecessary. GAO and a consultant spot checked conditions along the length of the pipeline. The operating company has been responsive to various environmental problems which had been identified. However, in order to fully adjudge the company's compliance with the stipulations, long-term environmental impact research is necessary. The research which has been done has been uncoordinated and inadequate. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that other agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey, cannot charge the cost of pipeline-related environmental studies to the ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should direct the authorized officer to establish a list of the priority research requirements necessary to evaluate the long-term environmental impact of the Alyeska Pipeline Service company's actions and conduct or arrange to have such studies conducted. Consideration should be given to the research projects previously mentioned in this report.

114088

Problems in Assessing the Cancer Risks of Low-Level Ionizing Radiation Exposure. EMD-81-1; B-196841. January 2, 1981. 733 pp.
Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.
This report consists of two volumes; Volume 1 (185 pages) contains the Summary Report and Volume 2 (648 Pages) contains the Technical Report and appendices.

Issue Area: Health Programs: Improving Our Health Status Through Elimination of Environmental Problems (1254); Consumer and Worker Protection: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0951).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Health: Consumer and Occupational Health and Safety (554.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Health and Human Services; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Interagency Radiation Research Committee; Public Health Service: Centers for Disease Control: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Government Operations; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs: Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations; Congress.
Authority: Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriation Act, 1980 (P.L. 96-74). P.L. 95-622. P.L. 95-601.
Abstract: Public concern about the health effects of low-level ionizing radiation exposure has increased in recent years. Therefore, GAO undertook a study to determine what definite conclusions, if any, can be drawn from current scientific knowledge about the cancer risks of low-level ionizing radiation exposure and what conclusions can be drawn about the best direction for current and future federal research. The immediate goal of the federal research program is to develop a data base for estimating the risk of low-level radiation exposure. The long-term goal is to understand the mechanisms and processes of how radiation causes cancer. Data from two studies involving low-level radiation were analyzed; a literature search was conducted; and the current status of ionizing radiation research was reviewed. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** As yet, there is no way to determine precisely the cancer risks of low-level ionizing radiation exposure, and it is

unlikely that this question will be resolved soon. There is a continuing need for federally sponsored research in this area, and GAO believes that federal research efforts can be strengthened. It also agrees with the objectives of current congressional and executive branch initiatives to coordinate federal research efforts in this area. The Interagency Radiation Research Committee, recently formed by Presidential memorandum, is such an important area that GAO believes a federal interagency research review group should be created by legislation. Epidemiologists have used estimates of the number of cancers induced by high-level exposures to radiation to predict the numbers that may be induced by lower exposures. These predictions can vary widely depending on which of several mathematical equations is used. An intensive effort to synthesize the results of radiation research might be accomplished by developing quantitative theories of radiation carcinogenesis and critically testing their predictions with cellular and animal experiments. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should enact legislation giving statutory authority to an interagency committee to coordinate federal research on the health effects of ionizing radiation exposure. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Interagency Radiation Research Committee should, because of limited funding, ensure that epidemiological studies involving primarily low levels of ionizing radiation exposure are of sufficient scientific merit to justify the costs of long-term follow-up efforts. The Interagency Radiation Research Committee should ensure that the cognizant federal agencies continue to conduct epidemiological studies of groups, such as the Japanese atom bomb survivors, the uranium miners, and the radium dial painters, that offer large numbers of people and a range of radiation exposure doses. The Interagency Radiation Research Committee should ensure that the cognizant federal agencies continue to conduct a limited number of high-quality animal experiments, including those analyzing the metabolism and toxicity of radionuclides in beagle dogs and small-scale experiments to investigate radiation mechanisms. The Interagency Radiation Research Committee should consider carefully and initiate actions to implement recommendations in the June 1979 report of the Interagency Task Force, in particular: (1) encourage expansion in the number of scientists and institutions performing the research, and ensure that scientists of high quality are funded, (2) have the National Institute of Health and other agencies provide more of the fiscal support for the national laboratories, thereby giving them more access to the laboratories, and (3) ensure that a diversity of federal agencies continue to fund research, particularly in high priority research areas. The Interagency Radiation Research Committee should ensure, in research on ionizing radiation exposure, that increased priority and emphasis are given to studying the mechanisms of how radiation causes cancer, through molecular and cellular studies and other fundamental research.

114114

New Strategy Required For Aiding Distressed Steel Industry. EMD-81-29; B-198441. January 8, 1981. 135 pp. plus 3 appendices (45 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Refer to Testimony, October 4, 1983, Accession Number 122597.

Issue Area: Materials: Impact of Government Policy That Stabilizes or Decreases Materials Prices and/or Changes the Industry's Structure (1852); International Affairs: U.S. Balance of Trade (0602); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Economic Effects of Government Regulations on Major Sectors or Industries (4061); Materials: Influence of the Federal Policy Apparatus Upon Materials Availability (1818).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0); General Purpose Fiscal Assistance: Other General Purpose Fiscal Assistance (852.0); Commerce and Housing Credit: Other Advancement of Commerce (376.0); General Government: Other General Government (806.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Commerce; Department of Transportation; Council of Economic Advisers.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *House* Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Senate* Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs; Congress; *Rep.* Henry S. Reuss.

Abstract: GAO reviewed the problems facing the domestic steel industry and outlined the factors that should be considered in developing a program to revitalize the industry as a part of its ongoing efforts to improve the nation's capabilities to meet the materials requirements of the national economy. The comprehensive steel policy components addressed by GAO include: (1) wage and compensation restraint and labor-management commitment to a sound revitalization strategy; (2) measures to induce the entry and growth of new competitors; (3) accelerating depreciation rates; (4) improving administration of environmental regulation; (5) eliminating discriminatory price restraints; and (6) creating a trade policy yielding predictable and acceptable effects on imports with a minimum of inflation. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** There is an international surplus of steelmaking capacity. However, if there is an upturn in the global economy, competition for foreign production is certain to increase significantly and there may not be enough steel to supply all customers. A large segment of the U.S. steel industry has become unable to compete with efficient foreign producers due to high labor costs, inefficiently sized plants, low utilization capacity, and restrictive government policies. Transportation costs give U.S. steel an edge in some domestic markets. Unfair pricing of steel products in the United States by foreign producers has been alleged to harm U.S. competition in the steel market. If American steel producers are to regain lost domestic consumers, they will need newer and more productive facilities and a more customer-oriented approach to their marketing. Many nations provide their steel industries with preferential financing, loan guarantees, and trade inducements. An effective policy toward steel ought to represent the nation's overall objective for the domestic industry's performance and include means for stimulation of competition, assistance in capital formation, and administration of environmental regulations. In establishing a performance goal, factors to be considered are: the point beyond which national security will be compromised if capacity drops; a target market-share for domestic firms; a target ratio of capacity to peak domestic needs; and the extent to which the industry's modernization and expansion needs can be met without depending on government assistance.

Recommendation To Congress: Congress should enact legislation to define a performance objective for the domestic steel industry. This objective, defined in terms of industry-wide, efficient capacity goals and a timeframe for their realization, should serve as a benchmark against which the realism of industry revitalization activity and related government policy can be assessed. Such legislation may have to be subsequently amended in light of periodic reevaluation of mandated capacity assessment studies. The objective should also be sufficiently stable to give confidence to investors and policy administrators. Congress should consider the kind of labor and management commitments to industry revitalization which presently exist and/or which may be needed. Meaningful labor and management commitments could include: (1) continuing labor's helpful attitude towards adopting efficient new technology; (2) restraining wage, salary, and dividend levels and devising innovative methods as needed to redress compensation premium problems; and (3) new initiatives to minimize adverse job dislocation effects arising from plant closings, adoption of new technology, or business cycle fluctuations. Congress should, as part of its consideration of a performance objective for the domestic steel industry, review the Administration's latest steel program. Such a review should relate alternative performance objectives to specific program proposals such as (1) assistance on near-term (5-year) capital formation and investment needs; (2) the adequacy of proposed import controls to jointly satisfy the earnings-investment needs of producers, the inflation protection needs of domestic consumers, and trade access opportunities for low-cost foreign suppliers; and (3) proposed amendments to environmental laws to ensure that they reflect both a commitment to reasonable administrative flexibility and industry achievement of environmental protection standards. Congress should enact legislation requiring the Executive Office of the President or other appropriate executive branch agencies to undertake a biannual assessment of steel capacity conditions. The assessment should cover both domestic and foreign suppliers and the plausible range of supply-demand conditions which might be encountered over the coming 5 to 10 years. These recurring assessments ought to provide the basis for judging the present and prospective capability of the domestic steel industry and for identifying policy initiatives to avoid undue risk from foreign supply sources.

114187

[Assessment of Grant Expenditures To Fund New Jersey Interagency Toxic Waste Investigations/Prosecutions Program]. CED-81-50; B-201760. January 16, 1981. 2 pp. plus 1 enclosure (7 pp.) plus 1 attachment (1 p.).

Report to Douglas M. Costle, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Baltas E. Birkle, (for Henry Eschwege, Director), GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Law Enforcement Assistance Administration; New Jersey: Division of Criminal Justice.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.
Abstract: GAO reviewed certain aspects of the New Jersey Interagency Toxic Waste Investigations/Prosecutions Program. The review focused on two Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) grants and one Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant and related matching state funds which were used to fund the activities of the program. The work covered program operations by the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The GAO test of grant expenditures disclosed that some expenditures in the area of laboratory services were for nongrant purposes. An objective of the EPA grant was to have a state laboratory sampling and analysis capability for chemical wastes. Designated staff were to be provided with the necessary technical assistance from the EPA regional laboratory. Existing equipment available to the State Medical Examiner was to be used in this effort. Contrary to the grant objective, a state toxic waste sampling and analytical capability has not been established in the State Medical Examiner's office. Although two technical staff members were paid from grant funds for periods of 6 and 5 months, respectively, they did not perform toxic analysis work. Toxic analysis service was obtained primarily from private laboratories. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should take steps to obtain from the State of New Jersey reimbursement of EPA grant funds expended in connection with salaries, fringe benefits, and indirect costs of the toxicologist and his assistant.

114195

[Authority of District Court To Enforce Agency-Signed Consent Agreements]. B-201204. January 23, 1981. 2 pp.

Letter to Donald Stever, Jr., Chief, Department of Justice: Land and Natural Resources Division: Pollution Control Section; by Milton J. Socolar, General Counsel.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.
Organization Concerned: Department of Justice: Land and Natural Resources Division: Pollution Control Section; Environmental Protection Agency; United States District Court: District of District of Columbia.
Authority: Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Environmental Defense Fund v. Costle, Civ. Act. No. 79-1473 (D.C. Cir. 1980). 28 U.S.C. 1361.
Abstract: An opinion was requested as to whether it is ever within the authority of a district court to enforce a consent judgment which restricts the means by which an agency will meet its mandatory responsibilities. GAO believes that, if a consent agreement is entered into in good faith on the part of the agency with due consideration as to lawfulness and public policy, it is a proper and valuable tool for the government. Therefore, GAO would argue in the affirmative as to the authority of a district court to enforce agency-signed consent agreements.

114262

Cost and Benefits of Government Regulation: An Environmental Dilemma. 1981. 4 pp.

by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

In The GAO Review, Vol. 16, Issue 1, Winter 1981, pp. 23-26.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. Toxic Substances Control Act.
Abstract: There are three principal issues which need to be addressed in the broad spectrum of government environmental regulation: (1) what the nature of environmental regulation is; (2) its costs and benefits; and (3) how environmental regulation can be simplified and the cost reduced. Environmental regulation generally takes two forms: technology-based regulation and risk-assessment-based regulation. In technology-based regulation, uniform standards are set, based on available control technology. This is a very rigid form of regulation which does not require a cost/benefit test. Some individual environmental regulations conflict with each other. The regulations need to be synchronized and sufficient flexibility introduced into the regulatory process to achieve the greatest overall benefit. Risk-assessment-based regulation attempts to reach judgments as to the relative risks associated with human and environmental exposure to potentially dangerous substances, versus the benefits in using such substances. The scientific bases for these judgments are often very uncertain. Independent assessment of scientific and technical information in the decisionmaking process can be successful in improving the process and forestalling costly litigation. The cost to some small communities exacts a much higher economic and social price because the costs must be shared by fewer taxpayers, sometimes placing severe burdens on low-income residents. Economists differ as to whether expenditures are basically productive or add much lasting value to society. Knowing the actual

state of the environment before imposing regulatory measures and developing innovative approaches can lighten the burden of regulation.

114313

[Chicago's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan--Costs Continue To Rise and Completion of Phase I Is Unlikely]. CED-81-51; B-201801. January 21, 1981. ***Released*** January 30, 1981. 4 pp. plus 1 enclosure (2 pp.).

Report to Sen. Charles H. Percy; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Chicago, IL: Metropolitan Sanitary District.

Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Charles H. Percy.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977.

Abstract: GAO was asked to provide updated cost information on Chicago's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP). Previous reports by GAO pointed out the staggering cost of the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago's solution to these problems and questioned whether the country could afford such an expensive and precedent-setting endeavor. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In its review, GAO found that: (1) the cost of TARP and its associated projects has continued to escalate to a current estimate of $10.2 billion; and (2) based on the current rate of inflation, recent funding levels for the Environmental Protection Agency's construction grants program, and the State of Illinois' funding policy for that program, Phase I of TARP would never be completed. The only way in which the unfunded TARP Phase I could be completed would require that (1) Congress appropriate the $5 billion currently authorized by the Clean Water Act for 9 years starting in 1987; and (2) the District receive the entire $260 million allocated to Illinois. However, if this were to occur, no funds would be available for any other pollution control project in the state during these 9 years. Based on past experience, it is highly unlikely that such actions would occur.

114323

Actions Needed To Increase Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Exploration and Development. EMD-81-40; B-201799. February 11, 1981. 157 pp. plus 17 appendices (46 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Availability of Federal Lands To Help Meet the Nation's Energy Needs (1628); Energy: Management of Leased Federal Lands (1629); Energy: Better Development of the Nation's Oil, Natural Gas, and Other Fossil Resources (1637).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Department of the Interior; Department of Agriculture; Department of Defense; Bureau of Land Management; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey; Forest Service; United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Defense Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Military Construction Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Agriculture and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Congress; *Rep.* Edwin B. Forsythe; *Rep.* John B. Breaux; *Rep.* Richard B. Cheney; *Sen.* William L. Armstrong.

Authority: Mineral Lands Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.; 30 U.S.C. 351 et seq.). Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1975 (90 Stat. 1083). Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.). Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1280). Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101). Engle Act (Minerals). Land Policy and Management Act. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National).

Abstract: The use of federal lands for fossil fuels exploration has become an important issue. Managing these lands involves difficult trade-offs between the often conflicting issues of development, conservation, and environmental protection. An examination was performed on how the exploration and development of oil and gas from federal lands could be accelerated. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the use of federal lands for fossil fuels exploration and development is hampered by: (1) the unavailability for leasing of prospectively valuable federal oil and gas lands; (2) the imposition of stipulations on leases which restrict exploration and development; and (3) lengthy delays in the approval of federal leases and drilling permits. GAO has determined that the first two of these issues are more significant due to the indefinite duration of actions which have closed lands, the severity of stipulations on leases, the large acreages involved, and their substantial oil and gas potential. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should determine whether it wishes to be excluded from the review and possible disapproval of decisions to close lands to mineral leasing. If not, Congress should amend section 202(e) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act to provide that the management decisions closing lands to mineral leasing and affecting smaller sized tracts should be reported to Congress. Section 202(e) should be further amended to require that the Department of the Interior submit with each report to Congress the minerals report described in section 204(c)(2) for withdrawals and any other information required in section 204(c)(2) which Congress considers appropriate. Congress should also amend section 3 of the Engle Act so that the withdrawal information for military applications conforms with the Land Policy and Management Act's section 204(c)(2) requirements for mineral analyses. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should direct the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, respectively, to establish standards and criteria for the use of restrictive stipulations, such as surface disturbance and "no surface occupancy" restrictions. Leasable lands should then be inventoried to determine the extent of the use of such stipulations and to verify if the stipulation use meets the standards and criteria. Stipulation uses which are determined to be unjustified should be removed. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Bureau of Land Management to: (1) change its guidelines implementing the Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to defer the requirement for environmental assessments for oil and gas activities until surface disturbance is proposed; (2) establish standard timeframes for completion of lease processing; (3) work with surface management agencies to develop cooperative agreements and goals for lease processing; and (4) develop a standard follow-up system for tracking outstanding lease applications. The Secretary should direct the Geological Survey to: (1) clearly state in its guidelines what the operator is required to submit; (2) review drilling permit applications and notify an applicant within 7 days of the filing date if his application is incomplete; (3) develop standard procedures for tracking and recording actions; and (4) coordinate with operators so that they have an archaeologist available during joint-site inspections. The Secretary of Defense should formulate a minerals policy, consistent with current national energy needs and evaluations of oil and gas potential on affected lands, that will provide guidance to the military services in making installations available to leasing. The Secretary of the Interior should: (1) establish criteria upon which "no leasing" decisions must be based and also require the Bureau of Land Management to maintain records of "no leasing" decisions adequate enough to permit periodic congressional oversight; (2) require the Bureau to inventory lands which have been closed by management decision to oil and gas leasing, and then retain closure only to the extent it can demonstrate that a continuation of the decision not to lease is based on the criteria defined above; (3) direct the Bureau to give priority to evaluating the pre-Environmental Policy Act of 1969 Defense withdrawals under the Bureau's withdrawal review program; (4) direct the Geological Survey to review the oil and gas potential of the Fish and Wildlife Service's refuges in the lower 48 states; (5) direct the Bureau to develop a withdrawal review program to include the remaining 38 states; and (6) direct the Bureau to inventory and justify lands withheld from the simultaneous leasing system.

114345

Federal Water Resources Agencies Should Assess Less Costly Ways To Comply With Regulations. CED-81-36; B-197329. February 17, 1981. 51 pp. plus 9 appendices (33 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Water and Water Related Programs: Problems Impacting on the Timely, Efficient, and Economical Construction and Maintenance of Water Resources Projects (2509).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0); Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services: Training and Employment (504.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Army; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Department of Labor; Department of the Interior; Department of Agriculture; Water Resources Council; Department of the Interior: Water and Power Resources Service.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.). Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Executive Order 11246.
Abstract: The rapid growth of government regulations, coupled with recent economic difficulties facing the nation, has heightened public concern over regulatory costs and burdens. The President has ordered agencies which write regulations to evaluate their economic impact. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Many social and environmental regulations have a major impact on the costs, competition, and the administration of federal water resources projects. Agencies and contractors have major compliance responsibilities during construction, and both are concerned with the cost and burden of regulations, especially the cumulative impact. GAO interviewed construction officials about their concerns in several regulatory areas and studied compliance practices in the areas of fish and wildlife conservation, cultural properties protection, and employment of women in construction. Construction officials were concerned about the cumulative cost and burden of regulations, the lack of consideration of economic impacts, and coordination difficulties. The case studies showed that, when agencies planned projects, they did not develop enough information on costs, burdens, and benefits to evaluate alternatives. Contractors had insufficient knowledge and advice in the area of regulation compliance. Time factors prevented agencies from developing more information on alternatives. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Director of the Water Resources Council should develop methods and techniques which construction agencies can use in evaluating alternative means of compliance with social and environmental regulations and consider sharing them with other federal, state, or local agencies that might benefit from such information. The Secretary of the Army should direct the Chief of Engineers, and the Secretary of the Interior should direct the Commissioner of the Water and Power Resources Service, to evaluate alternative methods of compliance with social and environmental regulations in construction and initiate action for doing so which satisfies the needs listed above.

114473

The Effects of Regulation on the Electric Utility Industry. EMD-81-35; B-149244. March 2, 1981. 68 pp. plus 9 appendices (29 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Ability of the Nation To Achieve Its Electrical Needs Given the Current System of Organization and Regulation (1627); Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Appropriate Federal Role in Promoting Capital Formation in the U.S. Economy (4030).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Department of the Interior; Environmental Protection Agency; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Atomic Energy Act of 1954. Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Endangered Species Act of 1973. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 651(b)).
Abstract: Over the past decade, electric utility companies have been subjected to an increasing number of regulatory requirements by federal and state agencies. Compliance with these requirements has been and continues to be costly. There has been a growing concern that regulations are putting too great a burden on the economy. GAO reviewed the regulatory process as it has been applied to electric utility operations. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The review led to the following overall observations: (1) electric power projects and operations have been more costly as a result of changing regulatory requirements and delays and uncertainties associated with the regulatory process; (2) the utility companies' ability to provide adequate supplies of power to their service areas has not been adversely affected; (3) tangible benefits to ratepayers have not always been visible, although some social benefits may have been realized; (4) regulators often did not know how to best achieve their objectives or assess the results of a requirement; (5) it is imperative that government provide a balanced approach in regulating the industry so that the cost and reliability of future power services are considered along with the environmental, health, and safety concerns of the public; and (6) the Carter administration and Congress appeared to be much more concerned with the economic effects of regulatory actions and with evaluating the costs and benefits of achieving a desired goal. However, few of these efforts are directed towards

alleviating the more routine regulatory problems, and the problems will continue unless cognizant regulatory agencies recognize them and become more aggressive in redirecting their regulatory emphasis and incorporating greater precision in their efforts.

114494

Impact of Regulations--After Federal Leasing--On Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Development. EMD-81-48; B-202033. February 27, 1981. 52 pp. plus 4 appendices (11 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Nuclear Nonproliferation (1614); Environmental Protection Programs: Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (2252); Intergovernmental Policies and Fiscal Relations: Federal, State, Area-Wide, and Local Coordination (0402).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of Commerce; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; Congress; *Rep.* Edwin B. Forsythe.

Authority: Outer Continental Oil Shelf Lands Act. Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Endangered Species Act of 1973. Clean Water Act of 1977. Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. Submerged Lands Act. Permit Streamlining Act of 1977 (California).

Abstract: After industry acquires outer continental shelf (OCS) lands, several federal and state permits or approvals are needed before any drilling activity may begin. With the Outer Continental Oil Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978, Congress sought to interject a balance between development of oil and gas resources and preservation of other coastal water resources. GAO evaluated the effects of requirements stemming from the amendments and other legislation on industry efforts to explore and develop oil and gas resources after leases are awarded. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The real impact of the amendments is still largely unknown because new rules and regulations have not been fully tested in any of the OCS areas. Before any activity can take place on leases on the OCS, the Geological Survey must approve industry's plans for exploration and development. Regulations instituted by the Survey significantly increased the time required for approval in the Gulf of Mexico region. Revised regulations implemented to meet the mandated timeframes specified in the amendments have improved the Survey's responsiveness, but processing times will probably never return to pre-1978 lengths. Four federal agencies primarily are involved in issuing permits before exploration or development activities can proceed. A delay by one can hold up the entire process. The most serious delays have been caused by agencies where timeframes to issue permits are not legislatively mandated. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) drilling discharge permits are the most time consuming and have had perhaps the greatest effect on OCS operations. Agencies generally have not actively monitored, enforced, or evaluated the effectiveness of regulatory requirements. The increased role of state and local governments does not have to delay operations, but that potential exists. Despite the regulatory process, GAO found a credible record by industry in pursuing offshore oil and gas. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should enact legislation to establish a standard, reasonable time within which all federal agencies, particularly the Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps of Engineers, are required to complete approvals and issue permits. A maximum 90-day turnaround time should be the general rule, including the time for state consistency reviews. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Commerce, working through the Coastal Zone Management Program and the Steering Committee, should encourage and assist other coastal States in developing legislation and administrative procedures similar to California for making local permitting and review processes more uniform, timely and coordinated. The Secretary of the Interior should complement that undertaking by requiring the Department to encourage states in developing cooperative programs and to seek greater participation in joint review processes. The Secretary of the Interior should also establish within the Department a permit assistance office, patterned after the California example, and charge it with such tasks as helping applicants understand the permitting process; working with other permitting agencies; helping to mediate disputes; coordinating joint evaluation programs; consolidating public hearings; monitoring decision time limits; and feeding back information to the newly created Steering Committee.

114497

Marine Sanctuaries Program Offers Environmental Protection and Benefits Other Laws Do Not. CED-81-37; B-118370. March 4, 1981. 25 pp. plus 2 appendices (11 pp.).

Report to Rep. John B. Breaux, Chairman, House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Commerce; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; *Rep.* John B. Breaux.

Authority: Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Outer Continental Oil Shelf Lands Act. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. Water Pollution Control Act. Endangered Species Act of 1973. Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. Antiquities Act. Historic Preservation Act.

Abstract: Title III of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act established the Marine Sanctuaries Program, which preserves or restores ocean areas for their conservation, recreational, ecological, or esthetic values. A review was performed to determine whether the program is providing marine environmental protection over and above that which is provided under other federal statutory authorities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Although the program overlaps with other federal laws that protect the marine environment, it complements their authority by offering benefits other laws do not. The program provides comprehensive regulation, planning, and management to ensure long-term preservation of all the resources that require protection. It also provides environmental protection where gaps exist in the coverage provided by other federal regulatory authorities. The program also encourages and supports the research and assessment of the condition of sanctuary resources and promotes public appreciation of their value. GAO believes that title III is an appropriate way to accomplish the basic objectives Congress envisioned in establishing an effective marine sanctuaries program.

114500

The Nation's Unused Wood Offers Vast Potential Energy and Product Benefits. EMD-81-6; B-201086. March 3, 1981. 92 pp. plus 4 appendices (23 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.
Refer to Testimony, July 30, 1981, Accession Number 090894.

Issue Area: Materials: Renewing and Extending the Availability of Materials (1814); Land Use Planning and Control: Management of Federal Lands (2306); Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Agriculture; Department of Energy; Department of Defense; General Services Administration; Environmental Protection Agency; Forest Service.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Agriculture; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; Congress.

Authority: Wood Residue Utilization Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-554). Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (92 Stat. 3117). Energy Tax Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-618). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.). P.L. 95-617. P.L. 95-621. S. 1775 (96th Cong.).

Abstract: Immense quantities of wood residues are wasted in the United States in the form of decaying logging residues and dead trees, unused wood processing residues, and large, untapped acreages of small, defective, and other lower value trees. Wood residues could be an important energy source. A study was made of federal policies that are contributing to this lost potential. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO identified numerous factors standing in the way of greater use of wood residues for energy and products. These barriers include inadequate data on the volume, location, accessibility, and availability of forest residues; lack of economical and effective equipment for harvesting and transportation of residues; lack of investment capital needed for harvesting and using residues; and limited awareness and acceptance of wood energy and product technology among industrial firms, utilities, and state and local bodies. Other obstacles pertain to federal forest management policies and programs, utility practices and regulations, and environmental concerns related to greater use of residues. The Forest Service and the Department of Energy (DOE) have made little progress in developing a national wood residue plan. The agencies should make a number of residue assessments in operating areas which are defined in terms of key factors such as topographical features, transportation corridors, economic hauling distances, and landowner attitudes. The Forest Service should take the lead in accomplishing the needed assessments. DOE should be an active participant in the studies. The assessments must deal more with resource management problems than end-use technology questions. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should present to Congress within 2 years a national wood residues plan, including proposed residue use goals and recommendations for legislation or other actions to overcome barriers to such goals. It should be supported by data on regional variations developed through the residue assessments. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should work jointly to implement an accelerated program to develop and demonstrate residue-handling equipment in cooperation with private industry. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should work jointly to develop standardized methods for evaluating the costs and benefits of using wood fuels in federal facilities, including allowance for forest management benefits, and submit these methods to the Office of Management and Budget within 6 months for dissemination to the executive branch to ensure consistency in life-cycle energy evaluation. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should establish a program to promote use of wood fuels among industry, utilities, and state and local bodies through increased participation in demonstration projects and the provision of educational materials and direct technical assistance. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should: (1) convert all Department facilities to wood fuels for all or part of their heating/power needs where life-cycle evaluations show them to be cost effective; and (2) identify and evaluate additional opportunities to demonstrate wood-energy technologies at Department facilities in order to enhance the prospects for future economic feasibility of such technologies. The Secretary of Agriculture should upgrade the forest survey to provide an inventory of the potentially usable biomass of all trees and woody shrubs, logging residues, and dead trees on the nation's commercial forest lands. The Secretary of Agriculture should request legislation which would authorize the Department to grant private firms either title or an exclusive license in residue-handling equipment and reconstituted wood product technologies developed wholly or partly with federal funds when needed to stimulate commercialization. The Secretary of Agriculture should: (1) increase promotion of new reconstituted wood product technologies developed with federal funds by allocating necessary resources to effectively disseminate information and provide technical assistance to forest products firms; and (2) adopt a more flexible policy which allows use of long-term contracts to ensure that residues from national forests will be available on a continuous basis when needed to achieve increased residue use in a given area. The Secretary of Agriculture should: (1) demonstrate Forest Service ability to conduct tree measurement sales and convert the agency's western region to the tree measurement basis as rapidly as possible; and (2) preserve logging residues for potential future use by foregoing burning whenever possible under sound forest management practices. The Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of General Services should ensure, in implementing existing policies for conversion of their heating/power systems from oil and natural gas to alternative fuels, that wood is given equal consideration with coal in forested regions of the country. A canvass of wood conversion opportunities at all such facilities should be made to later be tested by the standard feasibility evaluation methods developed by the Forest Service and DOE. They should also issue procurement guidelines pointing out that, because of their value in meeting national energy goals, residue-based wood products be carefully considered as alternative materials for all construction and related applications. The Administrator of EPA should request legislation to amend the Clean Air Act to allow full recognition of trade-offs in facilities siting decisions. The Administrator should encourage the states to modify their policies where needed to recognize such trade-offs. The Administrator of EPA, to help promote wood residue use in locations where current air pollution regulations preclude such facilities, should develop policies and procedures that: (1) recognize emission trade-offs resulting from reduced burning of residues in the woods or in other locations and increased burning at proposed wood energy facilities; and (2) allow such trade-offs to be considered in deciding whether a woodburning facility may be constructed and what type of pollution control equipment will be required. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy should conduct a cooperative program of assessments in at least six locations around the country. The Secretaries should select the areas they believe hold the most promise for increased use of residues based on estimates of residue availability and cost and availability of competing energy sources. Specific information to be developed through assessments should include: (1) the cost of making detailed residue inventories in each assessment area, with projections of costs to make such inventories regionally and nationally; (2) the volumes of wood residues that are potentially available in each area and the costs to collect and remove them using conventional equipment; (3) the specific needs for improved equipment to lower collection and removal costs; (4) the benefits and costs of, and alternative federal roles in stimulating, greater removal and use of wood residues by modifying or initiating a number of possible forest management policies and programs on federal, state, and private lands and encouraging private investment in new or modified facilities to use wood residues; and (5) the extent of, and alternatives for reducing, additional barriers to residue use caused by utility practices and regulations, air pollution regulations, and other factors.

114566

[Analysis and Evaluation of Public Policies]. March 2, 1981. 15 pp.

Speech before the Public Works Policy Symposium, American Public Works Association; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: American Public Works Association; Environmental Protection Agency; Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. Safe Drinking Water Act.

Abstract: The tremendous size of the investment in the nations' public works programs justifies a critical evaluation of where the programs have been, where they are now, where they are headed, what the accomplishments and shortcomings have been, and whether objectives should be redirected or growth altered. Public works will face tougher competition from other federal programs for limited funds. Therefore, it is imperative that funding requests make the most convincing case that planned projects are clearly needed and cost beneficial. GAO reviews the programs and policies of the federal government and makes recommendations for improvements. It attempts to provide Congress with answers to problems such as: (1) the possibility of eliminating waste and the inefficient use of public money; (2) how federal programs are achieving their objectives; (3) other ways of accomplishing the objectives of these programs at lower costs; and (4) keeping accounting systems adequate to prevent funds from being spent illegally. Public works administrators will encounter significant challenges in the 1980's. Increasing concern over inflation and existing budget and credit constraints will give rise to more serious examination of how limited federal, state, and local funds can be used in the most cost effective way. Water pollution control has grown to be one of the largest public works programs in U.S. history. Greater flexibility in the laws is needed to allow less costly alternatives to some of the projects, as long as the water quality is not materially affected. GAO is particularly concerned with the trend towards constructing expensive advanced waste treatment facilities to prevent violations of water quality standards. Congress has been urged to consider a cost/benefit approach to funding advanced waste treatment projects. Transportation networks present a formidable challenge for public works administrators. Highway systems are deteriorating, particularly the interstate system. The cumulative effects of increasing needs for highway preservation, increased construction and maintenance costs, and lagging revenues necessitates a reassessment of the federal-aid highway program. Traffic congestion, transit deficits, and air pollution are problems which must be studied carefully. Program evaluations will be more stringent in the future, and it is essential for agencies to consider all alternatives and choose the plan which offers the best service at the lowest cost.

114567

[What's Ahead for the Nation's Water Quality Program]. January 14, 1981. 15 pp.

Speech before the 1981 Mid-Winter Meeting, Association of State and Interstate Pollution Control Administrators; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Association of State and Interstate Pollution Control Administrators.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977.

Abstract: GAO presented the results of its reviews and evaluations of the Water Quality Program and discussed its role and objectives in monitoring water pollution control activities. The main function of GAO is to provide Congress with information that it needs to carry out its legislative and oversight or review responsibilities. In this regard, GAO has conducted numerous reviews and audits of water pollution control programs. Current efforts include evaluations of water quality monitoring activities, the industrial pretreatment program, and the administration of the ocean discharge waiver provision of the Clean Water Act. In particular, the Water Quality Program needs to examine the following issues: (1) improving its basis for environmental decisions; (2) increasing the flexibility of environmental regulation; (3) using less costly treatment alternatives; (4) improving treatment plant operations; and (5) increasing state and local involvement in the overall water quality planning and management process.

114587

[The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the MX Missile System]. March 12, 1981. 10 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Public Lands Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Associate Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Department of the Air Force; Bureau of Land Management; Office of Technology Assessment.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Public Lands Subcommittee.

Authority: Land Policy and Management Act.

Abstract: The Air Force prepared a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the MX Missile System to aid in making the major decisions related to selecting the MX deployment area or areas and the approximate locations of the operating bases. GAO offered its observations concerning the draft EIS in the context that a draft EIS is issued to gain information to be considered in preparing the final EIS. Several factors diminish the credibility of the draft EIS. Weaknesses exist in the Air Force's system of internal controls for data used in the EIS. The draft itself is voluminous and difficult to review; the description of the operational concept and resource requirements is incomplete in some instances; and the draft contains several questionable assumptions. GAO believes that assumptions are questionable for selecting alternative operating base locations, determining resource availability, assessing impacts, and suggesting mitigating measures to deal with the impacts. These conditions are attributed to two factors: (1) the Air Force was faced with the difficult task of preparing a draft EIS based on various presumptions that have changed as the program has evolved, and (2) the draft EIS was prepared under very tight time limits that were necessary to attain initial deployment in July 1986. Currently, the Air Force is allowing 45 days to review, evaluate, and incorporate comments from the close of the comment period for the draft EIS until the final EIS is issued, because additional time is not available if it is to meet the critical milestone of deploying the system in 1986. This raises the question of whether the Air Force can produce a final EIS of sufficient reliability within a 45-day timeframe to enable decisionmakers to make an informed decision on the highly controversial and politically sensitive issue of MX deployment.

114638

The Council on Environmental Quality: A Tool in Shaping National Policy. CED-81-66; B-202230. March 19, 1981. 18 pp. plus 2 appendices (2 pp.).

Report to Sen. Edwin (Jake) Garn, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2208).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: General Government: Executive Direction and Management (802.0).

Organization Concerned: Council on Environmental Quality.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Sen.* Edwin (Jake) Garn.

Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Toxic Substances Control Act. Environmental Quality Improvement Act of 1970.

Abstract: Since its inception, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has been influential in shaping the nation's approach to protecting and preserving the environment. CEQ serves as an environmental adviser to the President and to Congress and has broached such issues as solar energy, land use, toxic substances, and endangered species. It has been instrumental in effecting the passage of major environmental legislation. An in-depth look at its responsibilities and how they have been carried out was presented. Questions concerning whether another agency could effectively fill the role of CEQ and whether there is a continued need for the role were addressed. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** CEQ is organized by environmental issue areas to provide broad but flexible coverage of major environmental concerns and problems. Its workload consists of projects required by law, special projects requested by the White House, and self-initiated projects. CEQ oversees and coordinates federal environmental efforts by: (1) advising the President and Congress on major environmental issues and problems; (2) coordinating the environmental efforts of federal agencies' programs; (3) acting as a clearinghouse for environmental information; and (4) formulating and issuing regulations for federal agencies to follow in reporting the environmental impacts of programs. GAO agreed that CEQ has been successful in carrying out its responsibilities. GAO also perceived a continuing need for the delicate role of CEQ in balancing environmental concerns with the many federal actions dealing with other national concerns such as energy development and economic growth.

114651

[Operation and Maintenance of Publicly Owned Wastewater Treatment Plants]. March 19, 1981. 11 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1956 (P.L. 84-660). P.L. 92-500.

Abstract: Many wastewater treatment plants are not meeting the performance standards they were expected to achieve. The failure to meet these standards not only has an adverse impact on the nation's ability to meet its clean water goals, but also represents the potential waste of tens of millions of dollars in federal, state, and local funds. GAO analyzed over 200 randomly selected major wastewater treatment plants and found that the violation of discharge permits is the norm rather than the exception. The problems GAO identified at some of the worst offending plants included: (1) design deficiencies; (2) equipment deficiencies; (3) infiltration and inflow overloads; (4) industrial waste overloads; and (5) operation and maintenance deficiencies. GAO also observed the lack of action taken by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), states, and municipalities to bring plants into compliance. GAO discovered that: (1) technical assistance provided by EPA and the states is limited and not effective in resolving problems; (2) enforcement actions taken by EPA and the states against permit violators followed no consistent pattern; and (3) funding required for plant modifications was not readily approved or available. One way to improve this situation would be to clearly specify who is accountable for ensuring that the plants, once constructed, will work as intended.

114793

Clean Air Act: Summary of GAO Reports (October 1977 Through January 1981) and Ongoing Reviews. CED-81-84; B-202500. April 1, 1981. 22 pp.

Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2208); Energy: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (1651).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy; Tennessee Valley Authority; Department of Defense; National Science Foundation.

Congressional Relevance: Congress.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal). Energy Supply and Environmental Coordination Act of 1974. Energy Conservation Policy Act. Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-620). P.L. 96-354. P.L. 96-479. S. 1308 (96th Cong.). H. R. 4985 (96th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO summarized and updated its reports and ongoing reviews relating to the Clean Air Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Major reports pertaining to the Clean Air Act included those on: indoor air pollution as an emerging health problem; federal-state environmental programs; energy health and safety issues needing a coordinated approach; the policy conflict between energy, environmental, and materials policies in the automotive fuel-economy standards; the Tennessee Valley Authority clean air settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the fluidized-bed combustion process as a method to burn coal efficiently and economically and meet air pollution requirements; the U.S. mining and mineral-processing industry; the review process for priority energy projects; improving the scientific and technical information available to EPA in its decisionmaking process; air quality; EPA tampering and fuel switching programs; better enforcement of car emission standards; U.S. refining capacity; improvements needed in controlling major air pollution sources; and 16 air and water pollution issues facing the nation. Ongoing reviews pertaining to the Clean Air Act included: a review of constraints in implementing the Clean Air Act for stationary sources; an assessment of the potential of developing a market for air pollution rights in the United States; acid precipitation; the effects of regulation on the electric utility industry; an evaluation of federal efforts to convert oil- and gas-fired boilers to coal; and an evaluation of the desirability of early public involvement in identifying locations for energy facilities.

114837

Issues in Leasing Offshore Lands for Oil and Gas Development. EMD-81-59; B-201745. March 26, 1981. 83 pp. plus 4 appendices (10 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Availability of Federal Lands To Help Meet the Nation's Energy Needs (1628); Energy: Management of Leased Federal Lands (1629); International Affairs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0651); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of Commerce; Department of Energy; Department of State; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; Congress; *Rep.* Edwin B. Forsythe.

Authority: Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (P.L. 83-212; 43 43 U.S.C. 1331; 16 U.S.C. 1361). Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978 (P.L. 95-372). Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a). Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1801). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (P.L. 91-190; 42 U.S.C. 4321). Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (33 U.S.C. 1251). Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (P.L. 94-370; 16 U.S.C. 1451). Coastal Zone Management Act Amendments of 1976. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-532; 16 U.S.C. 1431). Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Abstract: Up to 60 percent of the nation's undiscovered oil and gas resources are believed to be contained in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Over the past 10 years, Congress and three administrations have attempted to accelerate the leasing of these areas for oil and gas exploration and development. OCS leasing and development increased significantly during the 1970-80 period. The number of sales increased by more than 50 percent, and sales were held for the first time in seven new OCS frontier areas. These increases were achieved during a time when sales were continuously delayed by lawsuits. However, the planned goals of the 1970's were never achieved, only about 60 percent of the planned sales were held, the amount of land leased was only a small fraction of what was planned, and nine frontier areas were not opened for leasing. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Environmental concern and limited industry interest in the areas proposed for leasing appear to be the two major factors that have affected achievement of the leasing goals of the 1970's. Public concern and the need to develop more information about the environmental aspects of offshore development have led to an extension in the time needed to plan for lease sales, resulting in numerous lease sales being delayed or cancelled. Concern as to whether the government is receiving a fair monetary return on OCS resources, the restriction of OCS leasing in offshore national defense areas, and boundary disputes have also had an impact on the leasing goals. Because of these, about 25 million acres of OCS are not currently available for leasing. The majority of this acreage is thought to have good resource potential. Legislation enacted in 1978 seems to be working toward expediting the leasing and developing of OCS lands, but it is not leading to a timely resolution of the problems being surfaced. Numerous groups involved in the OCS program, including the Department of the Interior, have developed their individual perceptions of how the law is to be implemented. Also, there is considerable disagreement between federal and state governments on how state and local governments are to participate in the OCS decisions. Judicial decisions have significantly affected the policies and direction of offshore development as well as the administrative procedures of Interior. Interior is considering proposals to streamline the prelease process and to increase offshore leasing. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should identify and examine alternatives for leasing more of the tracts offered in lease sales. The Secretary of the Interior should take appropriate steps to ensure that sales scheduled under the present program are held as planned, thus giving a greater degree of credibility to the OCS leasing program. The Secretary of the Interior should continue to seek ways to streamline the leasing process with special emphasis on reducing the amount of time needed to plan for second and follow-on sales in a lease area, particularly the time needed to comply with environmental impact statement requirements. The Secretary of the Interior should reexamine the justification and rationale for the withdrawal of the 25 million acres of offshore lands currently not available for lease. The resource potential of these lands should be reexamined and reweighed against the reasons for exclusion to see if any additional high potential lands could now be made available for lease. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the United States Geological Survey to intensify its efforts to define more precisely the portions of the OCS that are potentially attractive for leasing. This action should lead to increased leasing in those specific areas within OCS regions where oil and gas resources are thought to be located.

114861

[Environmental and Other Problems Along the Alaska Pipeline Corridor]. EMD-81-69; B-202090. April 8, 1981. 9 pp.

Report to James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Management of Leased Federal Lands (1629); Land Use Planning and Control: Management of Public Lands To Optimize Public Benefits (2313).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Bureau of Land Management; Department of the Interior; Alaska.

Authority: Land Policy and Management Act (P.L. 94-579). Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act (P.L. 93-153).

Abstract: GAO reviewed the environmental impacts of federal lands which contain the State of Alaska's haul road, parts of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), and a portion of the proposed route of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. The objective of the review was to determine what negative environmental impacts, if any, have occurred on federal lands traversed by the State of Alaska's haul road and to assess the adequacy of federal and state efforts to mitigate present environmental damage and prevent unnecessary environmental degradation in the future. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Stipulations incorporated in the grant of the right-of-way issued to the State of Alaska for the haul road require that all operations be conducted to minimize environmental damage and to protect wildlife and human beings. However, GAO found that: (1) fish passage has been blocked; (2) erosion has threatened haul road integrity; and (3) the road is sinking as underlying permafrost melts. Improper road maintenance and inadequate culverts have contributed to these problems, some of which have gone unresolved for more than 6 years. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for monitoring adherence to the haul road right-of-way grant and has worked with the State of Alaska to resolve some of the environmental problems. Alaska developed a remedial action plan to correct some of the problems; however, the plan does not address all haul road deficiencies, and action on those which it does address has not been taken in a timely manner. The BLM land use plan for federal lands adjacent to the haul road is based on the short-term assumption that the haul road north of the Yukon River will not be open to the general public until completion of the gas pipeline construction. However, a recent court decision may result in the haul road opening as early as the summer of 1981. Under the present land use plan, few haul road facilities or services will be available when the road is opened, with consequent environmental damage. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to revise its land use plan for federal lands adjacent to the haul road and to take into consideration state plans for public travel in the near future. The Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to work with the State of Alaska in developing a plan which provides for the correction of haul road deficiencies. The plan should prioritize the improvements needed with preferred start and completion dates for each.

114870

EPA Actions Against the Hopewell, Virginia, Wastewater Treatment Facility. CED-81-47; B-200272. March 3, 1981. ***Released*** April 7, 1981. 7 pp. plus 6 appendices (41 pp.).

Report to Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Jr.; Sen. John W. Warner; Rep. Robert W. Daniel, Jr.; by Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectively and Efficiently Achieving Environmental Protection Objectives (2202); General Procurement: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (1951).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Virginia: Hopewell Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Robert W. Daniel, Jr.; *Sen.* John W. Warner, Jr.; *Sen.* Harry F. Byrd, Jr.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. Freedom of Information Act.

Abstract: GAO reviewed questions concerning the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA): (1) enforcement actions against the Hopewell Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility in Hopewell, Virginia; (2) technical assistance to the city of Hopewell; and (3) withholding of the final grant payment from the city. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Hopewell facility opened prematurely and experienced almost immediate problems with its solids-handling system and with incompatible and excessive industrial discharges. EPA presented the city with a consent decree requiring it to: (1) set timeframes for the completion of construction; (2) implement a program to remedy any deficiency in the facility; and (3) pay a fine for past permit violations. Because the city refused to sign the decree, EPA and the State of Virgina filed suit in a federal court against the city for violations of the Clean Water Act. The city contends that EPA has continued enforcement actions against it without providing requested technical assistance and has withheld a detailed evaluation study on the facility's operations. The city also claims that EPA has withheld a final grant payment pending completion of an interim audit, approval of a maintenance manual, and performance of a final inspection even though EPA has caused delays in the completion of these steps. EPA states that the final grant payment was withheld because the facility was in noncompliance with its permit and because the interim audit questioned costs equivalent to the amount withheld.

114996

[Adequacy of EPA Resources and Authority To Carry Out Drinking Water Program Activities]. CED-81-58; B-166506. April 23, 1981. 3 pp.

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; Sen. Robert T. Stafford, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2208).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* John D. Dingell; *Sen.* Robert T. Stafford.

Authority: Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.).

Abstract: The Safe Drinking Water Act was passed in 1974 to safeguard public drinking water supplies and to protect the public health. The act directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish national drinking water regulations which set purity standards for drinking water. It also authorized EPA to grant states primary responsibility, or primacy, for enforcing the regulations and standards. GAO reviewed the Safe Drinking Water Program administered by EPA. Two items merit attention: (1) the adequacy of resources available for selected Safe Drinking Water Program activities; and (2) the need to clarify EPA authority to carry out the activities of the Program. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** A comparison of resources available for program implementation and operation in primacy states versus nonprimacy states revealed a significant disparity. This disparity raised questions about equity and whether people living in nonprimacy states were as well protected as those living in primacy states. Another indication that EPA may not have sufficient resources available for nonprimacy state program activities was the disparity between the resources EPA has spent and those resources nonprimacy states estimate are needed to effectively implement a drinking water program. In a prior report, GAO stated that, in nonprimacy states, the coverage by EPA may be severely limited as a result of resource constraints and may not meet the same standards that EPA requires for primacy states. It is the opinion of GAO that the act does not clearly authorize EPA to carry out the day-to-day operations of a drinking water program in states unwilling or unable to assume primacy. Rather, the EPA role under the Act should be one of supervision, oversight, and encouragement of states to assume primacy. EPA feels that the act authorizes and requires it to establish such programs in nonprimacy states. Because of conflicting regulations, GAO was unable to definitely state that the EPA assumption is unwarranted or legally objectionable. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** The House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works should consider proposing amendments to the act which would clarify EPA authority to undertake the day-to-day operations of a drinking water program in nonprimacy states. Furthermore, should it be decided that EPA is authorized to undertake such a program, additional resources may be required to enable EPA to provide the same program coverage as it requires of the primacy states.

115033

[Implementation of Federal Coal Conversion Program]. April 23, 1981. 9 pp. plus 3 attachments (3 pp.).
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Energy Regulation Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Energy Regulation Subcommittee.
Authority: Energy Supply and Environmental Coordination Act of 1974. Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978.
Abstract: The Energy Supply and Environmental Coordination Act (ESECA) and the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act (FUA) were enacted to increase coal use and decrease the use of oil and natural gas in large utility and industrial boilers. The developing trend toward voluntary conversion by electric utilities should lessen the regulatory effect needed to achieve existing federal coal conversion goals. GAO identified several matters in Department of Energy (DOE) regulations which it referred to the Office of the General Counsel for an opinion on their consistency with congressional intent. These include DOE claims that: (1) the FUA provides the authority to impose environmental control measures beyond those required by other federal laws; (2) the act provides the authority to regulate units which are not the subject of an exemption petition; and (3) it does not necessarily consider any exemption to be permanent. GAO found that the site specific economic and environmental analyses, which were required by the ESECA prior to issuing conversion orders, were time consuming and expensive and that better coordination was required between DOE and the Environmental Protection Agency. The FUA provided DOE with additional authority to prohibit the use of petroleum and natural gas in new electric powerplants and industrial installations, limit increases in the amounts of oil and gas used in existing boilers, and prohibit the use of natural gas in existing boilers starting in 1990. Since the program started, it has focused on the largest boilers, those owned by electric utility companies. Industrial boilers have received little attention. Fourteen utilities are attempting or planning to convert to coal by 1988. If completed, these conversions are projected to save about 24,000 barrels of oil per day. It would be speculative to estimate to what extent industry would choose to purchase oil and gas fired boilers absent the FUA prohibitions. Many nonregulatory factors influence boiler fuel decisions which are subject to a variety of conditions such as the security of fuel supply, maintenance and operating costs, and physical space requirements. The price of fuel is the controlling factor.

115061

Better Monitoring Techniques Are Needed To Assess the Quality of Rivers and Streams: Volumes I and II. CED-81-30; B-201374. April 30, 1981. 2 vols. (326 pp.) plus 11 appendices (256 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Interior; Council on Environmental Quality; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: 40 C.F.R. 35.1500. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (82 Stat. 904). Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).
Abstract: Accurate, reliable data on the actual condition of the nation's rivers and streams are necessary for sound environmental planning and management. Existing national water quality monitoring networks do not provide the type or quality of data needed. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Water quality can change dramatically during 1 day, and within a short distance. Complex interactions among biological, chemical, and physical processes complicate the difficulties of water quality sampling. Infrequent measurements cannot accurately describe water quality, because rivers can change rapidly and extensively. Infrequent sampling also misses important events. Cost has been a major consideration in decisions on sampling frequencies. Each sampling site is affected by unique conditions, and water quality measurements taken at one site cannot normally be applied to other locations, not even those nearby in the same river. The Geological Survey focuses primarily on riverflow, not water quality. Stations are located toward the downstream end of drainage basins. The Survey does not intend to detect any particular category of water quality, water use, or related land use. The Survey, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) have used network data in statistical comparisons of water quality, but these comparisons are highly questionable. The variability of water quality, the limited frequency and locations of samples, and the inconsistency in field work and laboratory performance make it virtually impossible to compare the data meaningfully from month to month, season to season, and year to year. Special studies of water quality designed for individual river areas could overcome many weaknesses inherent in the sampling techniques. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA and the Chairman of CEQ should promote the use of other available indicators of national progress toward cleaner water. The Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of EPA should discontinue the three national water quality networks and shift to a program of special studies of water quality.

115111

Millions of Dollars Could Be Saved by Implementing GAO Recommendations on Environmental Protection Agency Programs. CED-81-92; B-202928. May 5, 1981. 5 pp. plus 2 appendices (19 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2214).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Water Act. Noise Control Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6901). Safe Drinking Water Act. Toxic Substances Control Act.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the opportunities to realize substantial savings through legislative and administrative changes in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) water pollution control and hazardous and solid waste programs. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Millions of dollars in savings and improved program operations would result from implementing the GAO recommendations on the water pollution control and hazardous and solid waste program. The recommendations that would produce the most substantial savings affect the water pollution control program and would require changes to the Clean Water Act. In view of the continuing emphasis on reducing the budget deficit, controlling inflation, and improving the benefits from federal expenditures,

Congress needs to give strong consideration to the recommendations. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should consider several alternatives that would give EPA the flexibility to consider costs more closely in justifying advanced waste treatment projects. Congress should amend the Clean Water Act to permit exception from the national goal of swimmable waters to recognize those situations in which waters are determined to be unswimmable because of other factors, such as heavy barge traffic, cold seasons of the year, and general appearance. Congress should amend the Clean Water Act to: (1) allow for increased flexibility in meeting water quality goals in those cases where it is determined that the cost to achieve such goals is prohibitive; (2) allow EPA to fund lower cost, nonstructural, or limited structural techniques that cannot be funded under current legislation and that are not normally considered operating and maintenance costs; and (3) permit federal funding of flood projects when the flooding is caused by combined sewer systems and the solution is part of a total approach designed to minimize both pollution and flooding in the combined system. Congress should amend the Clean Water Act to eliminate the mandatory requirement for secondary treatment of discharges to fresh water and to permit the EPA Administrator to grant waivers, deferrals, or modifications to this requirement when the dischargers can demonstrate that the environmental impact of secondary treatment will be minimal or insignificant. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The EPA Administrator should encourage and facilitate consideration of co-disposal as an alternative waste disposal process by requiring that planned agency evaluations of co-disposal projects provide for developing and disseminating actual operating cost data that cognizant officials can use in evaluating disposal options. The EPA Administrator should request that the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) be amended to allow EPA to include a fee system to cover hazardous waste program costs where: (1) a state cannot or will not assume responsibility for its program; and (2) the agency is required by the act to assume responsibility for the state's program. The EPA Administrator should encourage and facilitate consideration of co-disposal as an alternative waste disposal process by requiring that states and local communities consider co-disposal technology as a possible alternative during the areawide and facilities planning process and as part of RCRA planning activities. The EPA Administrator should encourage and facilitate consideration of co-disposal as an alternative waste disposal process by establishing a construction grants funding policy which, to the extent allowed under the existing legislative authority, would provide at least the same level of funding for deserving co-disposal projects as for single-purpose, sludge-only disposal options. The EPA Administrator should develop model legislation for the establishment of fee systems for use by states in obtaining the necessary authorizations from their legislatures. The Administrator of EPA should encourage state governments and agencies to develop self-supporting funding methods, such as fee systems, for operating and carrying out hazardous waste management programs within their jurisdictions.

115125

Hazardous Waste Sites Pose Investigation, Evaluation, Scientific, and Legal Problems. CED-81-57; B-200084. April 24, 1981. ***Released*** April 29, 1981. 51 pp. plus 3 appendices (14 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; Rep. Albert Gore, Jr.; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209); Consumer and Worker Protection: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0951).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Health and Human Services; National Science Foundation.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* Albert Gore, Jr.; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510). Solid Waste Disposal Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Clean Water Act of 1977. H.R. 5074 (96th Cong.). H.R. 1049 (96th Cong.). H.R. 3797 (96th Cong.). S. 2083 (95th Cong.).

Abstract: Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a mandate to: (1) discover, investigate, evaluate, and respond to uncontrolled hazardous waste sites; (2) perform hazardous waste research; and (3) seek solutions to hazardous waste problems and, if necessary, file suit in federal courts. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** EPA has had difficulty in fulfilling its mandate because: (1) site investigation and evaluation activities lag behind an ever-increasing number of potential sites requiring investigation and evaluation; (2) the capabilities to identify and analyze hazardous waste and understand the real or potential risk are limited by both cost and scientific knowledge; and (3) federal enforcement efforts have been limited by both the resources available to demonstrate potential harm in a case and by the need to identify potentially viable defendents to pay for remedial measures or cleanup costs. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should assess how the gederal government can expand its enforcement efforts at uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. If additional resources or increased legislative authority are among the alternatives, the Administrator should provide such information to Congress for its consideration. The Administrator of EPA should provide an estimate of the total EPA resources needed to investigate and evaluate potential hazardous waste sites. The estimate should be based on those sites currently known to need investigation and evaluation and those that are projected to need such action in each of fiscal years 1981 through 1985. The Administrator of EPA should provide an estimate of the amount of resources needed to clean up and respond to hazardous waste sites. Such amount should be based on those sites currently known to need cleanup or response action, those that are projected to need such action in each of fiscal years 1981 through 1985, and estimates of the fund's replenishment through responsible parties. The Administrator of EPA should direct the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development to evaluate ongoing EPA hazardous waste research programs in the biological testing, health effects, and transport and fate areas to determine what actions can be taken to increase EPA's efforts to: (1) develop and standardize biological monitoring and bioassay techniques as methods for determining whether samples taken from potential hazardous waste sites are or are not hazardous, thus reducing the initial need for more costly and time consuming chemical analysis; (2) better determine health effects, especially chronic effects, that are caused by or closely associated with exposure to hazardous waste; and (3) more accurately understand the transport and fate of hazardous substances as they leave disposal sites and migrate through the environment (soil, air, groundwater, and surface water) to reach human populations. The evaluation should specify where joint EPA/HHS research projects should be encouraged in these three areas.

115126

Better Data Needed To Determine the Extent to Which Herbicides Should Be Used on Forest Lands. CED-81-46; B-197558. April 17, 1981. ***Released*** April 27, 1981. 51 pp. plus 5 appendices (14 pp.).

Report to Rep. James H. Weaver, Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; Sen. Mark O. Hatfield; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Harmful Effects From Exposure to Toxic Pollutants--Reducing Risks to Humans and the Environment (2211); Land Use Planning and Control: Management of Federal Lands (2306).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Agriculture; Forest Service; Department of the Interior; Bureau of Land Management.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Forestry, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee; *Rep.* James H. Weaver; *Sen.* Mark O. Hatfield.

Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (42 U.S.C. 4321). BLM Manual 9222. Forest Service Manual 2476.41. Forest Service Manual 2155.3.

Abstract: Vegetation management programs and practices on forest lands managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management were reviewed. The main areas of discussion were the use of herbicides, the controversy over herbicides, the controversy's effect on forest land managers, and the need for both agencies to take actions that would provide better information for making vegetation management decisions. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The use of herbicides for managing unwanted vegetation on forest lands has become a public controversy. In some cases, their use has been restricted. Growing opposition stemming from unanswered questions about herbicides' health and environmental effects could result in further restrictions. Although it has been shown that nonherbicide methods can be used to control unwanted vegetation in national forests, the extent to which these methods can replace herbicides is not known. Serious information gaps exist relating to the costs of vegetation management methods and their relative effectiveness. Most forests GAO visited had some success with alternatives to herbicides. However, site-specific data were not available to identify why methods had succeeded in one area but not in another. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should instruct the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, respectively, to gather more comprehensive and complete cost data on their site preparation and release projects. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should instruct the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, respectively, to ensure that (1) those forests and districts relying heavily on herbicides increase the use of nonherbicide methods; and (2) adequate site-specific pretreatment and posttreatment information is gathered and evaluated. The Secretaries should also instruct the agency heads to develop more objective criteria for determining the need for release.

115266

To Continue or Halt the Tenn-Tom Waterway? Information To Help the Congress Resolve the Controversy. CED-81-89; B-167941. May 15, 1981. ***Released*** May 21, 1981. 92 pp. plus 8 appendices (46 pp.).

Report to Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Water and Water Related Programs: Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Water Resources Projects (2511).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Rep.* Joel Pritchard; *Rep.* Robert W. Edgar; *Sen.* John C. Stennis; *Sen.* Daniel P. Moynihan; *Sen.* William Proxmire; *Sen.* Charles H. Percy; *Sen.* Carl M. Levin; *Sen.* J. Bennett Johnston; *Sen.* Mark O. Hatfield.

Authority: Regional Development Act of 1975. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Department of Transportation Act (P.L. 89-670). Rivers and Harbors Act (P.L. 79-525). Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.). Federal Highway Act (P.L. 94-280). Executive Order 12113. Engineering Reg. 1120-2-114. H. Rept. 79-486. Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Ry. Co. v. Callaway, 382 F. Supp. 610 (D.C.D.C. 1974). EDF v. Corps of Engineers, 348 F. Supp. 916 (N.D. Miss. 1972).

Abstract: The Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway has had a long, troubled history. Congress authorized the project in 1946, but construction did not start until 1971. The approved project consists of the largest waterway currently under construction by the Corps of Engineers. The navigation portion of the waterway is scheduled for completion in 1986 and the overall project in 1988 with an estimated cost of $1.96 billion. A 114-mile section of the waterway was opened for limited traffic in 1979. Proponents of the waterway claim that it will benefit the entire nation by providing a more efficient and economical transportation route from the midcontinent and Eastern United States to the Gulf of Mexico. Opponents claim that the project is not economically and environmentally viable. Two lawsuits to halt construction have been brought against the government. The court ruled against the plaintiffs in both cases. Ten years after construction started, the waterway is 53-percent complete and expenditures continue at approximately $20 million a month. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO believes that two major issues remain: (1) whether the approximately $600 million to be saved by halting the project is worth the almost total loss of the $1.1 billion invested in the project; and (2) whether Congress, in approving the waterway, is sowing seeds for a future project to eliminate bottlenecks in the adjacent waterway. Neither waterway can reach Corps traffic projections without improvements. Congress may wish to explore alternative financing. A Corps study of the waterway showed a marginal, but satisfactory, benefit-cost ratio. The estimating practices used in the study may have been too liberal. Since the study was made, coal exports have increased which might increase movements on the waterway. If the waterway is completed, the Corps will have to propose an improvement project to Congress to eliminate traffic constraints caused by physical barriers and limited lock capacity. The Corps' budget estimate is reasonably accurate and includes proper inflation estimates. Land purchases to mitigate the loss of wildlife habitats will be submitted to Congress for approval. Regulations require that local sponsors perform, at their own expense, certain needed tasks and the states involved are expected to complete these tasks before the waterway opens. Operational and maintenance costs would be saved if the project were terminated, but funds would still be needed for such areas as upkeep and fire prevention for the remaining project.

Congress should consider the investments which states and localities have made in anticipation of the waterway being completed.

115306

[President's Seventh Special Message for FY 1981]. OGC-81-8; B-200685. May 13, 1981. 24 pp. plus 3 enclosures (17 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.

Budget Function: Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (990.2).

Organization Concerned: Executive Office of the President; Department of Agriculture; Department of Energy; Department of Education; Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Labor; Department of State; Department of Commerce; Department of Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency; Veterans Administration; Federal Trade Commission; Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; Office of Management and Budget; Department of the Interior.

Congressional Relevance: Congress.

Authority: Energy Security Act (P.L. 96-294). Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 281 et seq.). Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Clean Water Act of 1973 (P.L. 96-536; 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). B-202463 (1980). 40 U.S.C. 461. 42 U.S.C. 4341. 42 U.S.C. 4344. 42 U.S.C. 4345. 42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq. 42 U.S.C. 5318.

Abstract: GAO reviewed the President's seventh special message to Congress for fiscal year 1981. The special message proposed 81 rescissions of budget authority totaling $11.1 billion and 1 new deferral totalling $3.4 million. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Except as noted, GAO identified no additional information that would be useful to Congress in its consideration of the President's proposals and believes that the proposed deferral is in accordance with existing authority. GAO questioned whether some environmental quality activities being eliminated are duplicative regulatory activities. It appears that the effect of the rescission and other potential proposals will be to transfer functions to other agencies rather than eliminate duplicative activities. Given the relative significance of the proposed rescission, GAO questions the ability of the Council on Environmental Quality to function after the fund reduction. GAO questioned the justification of a proposed rescission of an agricultural program which provided that some funding for rural development could be obtained through other federal programs. Those funds are already committed, and diverting them would be difficult. The amount of funds that practically could be rescinded is also in doubt. The rescission of the Energy Information Administration proposal is not consistent with the GAO position that there is a need to ensure the accuracy and credibility of energy information used in formulating national energy policy. National Institutes of Health rescission proposals affect awards already made. Community development programs suggested for rescission are not duplicative in that they reach different beneficiaries and projects.

115320

Billions Could Be Saved Through Waivers for Coastal Wastewater Treatment Plants. CED-81-68; B-201192. May 22, 1981. 34 pp. plus 4 appendices (21 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Oversight and Special Investigations Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee; Congress.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Water Pollution Control Act.

Abstract: The Clean Water Act of 1977 allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to grant waivers to publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities so that thay can discharge primary treated municipal waste into the marine environment when it can be shown that costly secondary treatment is not necessary. Many communities have been discouraged from applying for secondary treatment waivers because of legislative constraints and restrictive EPA administration of the waiver provision. Billions of dollars in federal, state, and local funds could be saved if coastal communities discharging primary municipal wastewaters into the marine environment did not have to build costly and unnecessary secondary treatment facilities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Clean Water Act limited some communities from requesting waivers by providing a prohibitive time limit for initiating such requests. It also provided that communities without existing marine outfalls were ineligible for the waivers. EPA restricted the issuance of waivers through complex waiver regulations and extensive information requirements. The costs involved in submitting a completed application for waiver were excessive. In addition, federal funding was not provided for waiver studies. The scientists that GAO consulted believed that the standardized application and review process which EPA uses for all communities, irrespective of size and type of discharge, is not well suited to the waiver provision. A stratified approach was suggested which would take size and type of discharge into consideration. This would focus more attention on dischargers that have the most potential to harm the environment while allowing others to receive the waivers promptly. Immediate action by EPA and Congress would save billions of dollars in unnecessary expenditures. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should amend the Clean Water Act of 1977 to allow for a continuous secondary treatment waiver process for all coastal communities where the communities have shown that the risk of environmental damage is minimal. In particular, Congress should (1) eliminate the requirement that treatment facilities must have an existing marine outfall to qualify for a waiver; (2) remove the statutory deadline for filing waiver applications and provide for a continuous waiver process; and (3) indicate that the waiver provision is not intended to preclude communities already achieving secondary treatment from obtaining waivers in cases where primary treatment is both cost effective and environmentally sound. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should, if Congress takes action to allow for a continuous waiver process, experiment with ways of providing technical help to small coastal communities so that they can apply for secondary treatment waivers. The Administrator of EPA should, if Congress takes action to allow for a continuous waiver process, require step 1 facilities planning grant applicants for sewage treatment facilities in coastal areas to consider discharging primary wastes into marine waters as an alternative to secondary treatment. The Administrator of EPA should, if Congress takes action to allow for a continuous waiver process, revise the waiver application process to obtain a more stratified approach that differentiates between communities based on the population served, the type of waste being discharged, and the ability of the receiving water to assimilate the wastes so that simpler application procedures are used for communities that primarily have domestic wastes and little or no industrial wastes.

The Administrator of EPA should revise the EPA definition of best practicable wastewater treatment technology to allow for primary discharges into marine waters for communities that have waivers.

115366

[Marine Discharge Waivers for Publicly Owned Wastewater Treatment Facilities]. May 22, 1981. 11 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.
Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act.
Abstract: The Clean Water Act allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to grant waivers to publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities so that they can discharge primary treated municipal wastes into the marine environment where it can be shown that costly secondary treatment is not necessary. Although 230 communities have submitted preliminary applications for secondary treatment waivers to EPA, only 70 have filed final applications. EPA has not yet made any waiver decisions. EPA estimates that $1.5 billion in federal, state, and local construction costs could be saved if all 70 of the final applicants were given waivers. GAO identified hundreds of additional potential waiver applicants, representing additional construction savings, which have been prevented from applying for waivers because of legislative constraints and restrictive EPA regulations. As a result, billions of dollars may be wasted on unneeded but federally required secondary treatment facilities. The federal government usually pays 75 percent of eligible construction costs. GAO recommended that Congress amend the Clean Water Act to allow for a continuous secondary discharge waiver process for all coastal communities where it has been shown that the risk of environmental damage is minimal. Congress should: (1) eliminate the requirement that treatment facilities must have an existing marine outfall to qualify for a waiver; (2) remove the statutory deadline for filing waiver applications and provide for a continuous waiver process; and (3) indicate that the waiver provision is not intended to preclude communities already achieving secondary treatment from obtaining waivers in cases where primary treatment is both cost effective and environmentally sound. If Congress takes action to allow for a continuous waiver process, the Administrator of EPA should: (1) require step 1 facilities planning grant applicants to consider discharging primary wastes into marine waters as an alternative to secondary treatment; (2) revise the waiver application process to differentiate between communities on the basis of population, type of waste, and amount of environmental threat; and (3) experiment with ways of providing technical help to small coastal communities so that they can apply for secondary treatment waivers.

115486

[Environmental Protection Agency's Water Pollution Control Construction Grants Program]. June 10, 1981. 14 pp. plus 2 attachments (9 pp.).

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee.
Authority: Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (P.L. 92- 500). Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1956.
Abstract: Over the past several years, GAO has presented in its reports issues and concerns regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Construction Grants Program. This multibillion dollar program is one of the largest public works program in the history of the nation. It has been particularly successful in the control of industrial water pollution. Heavily polluted rivers are being cleaned up, and sport fish are returning to many rivers from which they disappeared long ago. Despite these successes, many problem areas have persisted. Secondary treatment is not always needed. Advanced waste treatment facilities, the most expensive type of pollution control, frequently are not well justified and may not substantially improve water quality. Thus, the benefits derived from the funds invested in such facilities are often seriously questioned. Comprehensive planning has not been accomplished. Nonpoint sources of pollution, such as runoff from agriculture and forest lands, are often more of a problem than pollution from industrial or municipal point sources. Less costly alternatives are not always used. Low-income families in small communities are finding it very difficult to pay user charges and hookup and connection fees arising from expensive treatment plants. Continuing operation and maintenance problems have significantly decreased the effectiveness of completed plants. Existing water quality monitoring systems do not provide the type and quality of data needed to assess conditions and the effectiveness of clean up efforts. Each of these areas needs the close attention of EPA. The question of accountability and responsibility for treatment plants involves complex charges, countercharges, and innuendos by the various parties involved in plant construction. Even when the potential exists to resolve the accountability/responsibility issue legally, EPA has not encouraged grantees to take action or become legally involved. Thus, federal, state, and local governments spend millions to fix the same treatment plants for which they originally spent millions to construct. Clear lines of accountability must be established in contracts, and changes and modifications to systems during any phase must be clearly documented.

115631

[Views on H.R. 2900, the Proposed Vegetation Management Reform Act of 1981]. B-203506. June 19, 1981. 5 pp.

Letter to Rep. James H. Weaver, Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.
Organization Concerned: Bureau of Land Management; Department of Agriculture.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; *Rep.* James H. Weaver.
Authority: H.R. 2900 (97th Cong.).
Abstract: GAO was asked to provide its views on the proposed Vegetation Management Reform Act of 1981 to promote forestry employment and the safe use of herbicides on public forest lands. The proposed legislation would require the institution of stricter guidelines on the use of herbicides in vegetation management programs and would require better information to be obtained before deciding on treatment and the method of treatment. Promotion of forestry employment under the legislation would be in line with and would strengthen the Forest Service's pesticide policy statement. Congress may wish to consider whether the bill should apply to all entities which manage forest land and may

wish to add a section authorizing the issuance of regulations and rules necessary to implement its provisions. The bill's language should be clarified regarding the priorities concerning employment and cost-efficient land management. Agencies do not have adequate data to implement the cost analysis requirements of the legislation. A section which would require the suspension of the use of a registered herbicide to determine its continued safe use should be revised to state more clearly the conditions that would trigger a pesticide suspension.

115788

EPA's New Research Controls: Problems Remain. CED-81-124; B-203649. July 14, 1981. 30 pp.
Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Research and Development Programs To Support Environmental Protection (2213); Science and Technology: Federal Laboratories and Federally Supported Organizations Performing Research and Development (2003).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Authority: Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978. P.L. 95-155.
Abstract: External and internal criticism prompted the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to take various steps in 1978 to improve research controls. GAO evaluated the degree to which EPA took action to implement its new research controls and how these new procedures resolved previous research planning and management problems. *Findings/Conclusions:* The GAO review of the new procedures and practices of EPA indicates that, although progress has been made, more still needs to be done. Because of the new research committees, communications between researchers and users have improved and the responsiveness of research findings to program needs is better than it was in the past. However, in many cases, the committees have not achieved agreement between researchers and the program offices concerning strategies and research to be performed. Draft and finalized strategies which GAO reviewed varied greatly in scope, detail, and presentation of program office needs and planned research activity. The relevance to program office needs of many currently planned research projects has been questioned without satisfactory resolution. Unless research groups formally agree that planned research will reasonably meet EPA priority regulatory needs, criticism of EPA research will continue. Research committees need to be kept apprised of significant modifications in the conduct of planned research. GAO found that none of the research committees it reviewed is performing this monitoring function. Existing monitoring systems are inadequate because they are either inoperative or do not contain sufficient data to effectively monitor projects. Ensuring quality research is a difficult task, but generally accepted standards include peer review and publication of research results in scientific journals. EPA has made significant progress regarding peer review and publication of final research results, but more needs to be done. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The EPA Administrator should require all research committees to develop approved strategy documents. The EPA Administrator should require strategy documents to include both a long-term strategic outlook and a shorter term, more detailed, overview of program office needs and planned Office of Research and Development (ORD) responses. The EPA Administrator should require that the technical information plan include all ongoing research outputs agreed to via the research committee planning process, with the names of specific research users identified. The EPA Administrator should require research committees to monitor research progress and implementation plans and ensure that research users are kept apprised of research progress. The EPA Administrator should establish procedures that require regulatory offices and laboratories to agree before projects are started that the approach and timing of research projects are reasonable to meet intended needs. The EPA Administrator should require ORD progress reports to identify specific research users for all program-related projects and require these reports to be distributed to the specific users. The EPA Administrator should reinstate the Project Tracking System to include the names of specific users for all program-related projects. The EPA Administrator should require external peer review of all research strategies and ensure consistent peer review of extramural and in-house research proposals.

115790

[President's Tenth Special Message for FY 1981]. OGC-81-13; B-200685. July 13, 1981. 4 pp.
Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.
Budget Function: Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (990.2).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Management and Budget; National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities: National Endowment for the Arts; National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities: National Endowment for the Humanities.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Supplemental Appropriations and Rescission Act, 1981 (P.L. 97-12). Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. 31 U.S.C. 1405(a).
Abstract: The President's tenth special message for fiscal year 1981 proposed four rescissions of budget authority totalling $114.1 million. Two of the proposed rescissions involve Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds for research and development and funds for abatement, control, and compliance. The justification statements for these rescission proposals stated that the funds identified for rescission were for lower priority activities and that these activities were not immediately needed to meet the statutory mandate of EPA. The special message stated that the estimated effects on contractors will be minimal. The other two proposed rescissions include salary and expense funds for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. *Findings/Conclusions:* At the time these proposals were reviewed, EPA officials were unable to identify the specific activities that would be affected by the rescission proposals. Therefore, GAO was unable to verify that the justification and estimated effects statements for the EPA rescissions were accurate. GAO continues to be concerned over the amount of time which elapses between the date funds are withheld from obligation and the date impoundment messages are transmitted to Congress. GAO reviewed the tenth special message and, except as noted, identified no additional information that would be useful to Congress in its consideration of the proposals.

115807

The Environmental Protection Agency Needs To Better Control Its Growing Paperwork Burden on the Public. GGD-81-40; B-158552. May 15, 1981. *Released* May 22, 1981. 39 pp. plus 5 appendices (35 pp.).
Report to Rep. Henry S. Reuss, Chairman, Joint Economic Committee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Data Collected From Non-Federal Sources: Government's Needs for Information (3103).
Contact: General Government Division.

Budget Function: General Government: Other General Government (806.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Management and Budget; United States Customs Service.

Congressional Relevance: *Joint* Economic Committee; *Rep.* Henry S. Reuss.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Clean Air Act. Reports Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980. Toxic Substances Control Act. Executive Order 12174. OMB Circular A-40. H.R. 6410 (96th Cong.). S. 1411 (96th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO was requested to examine the effectiveness of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) paperwork management program and policies. Because of recent environmental legislation and program changes, the EPA requirements for information from the public are expected to increase dramatically. Until the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, the Federal Reports Act of 1942 provided the foundation for controlling the federal government's paperwork burden on the public. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) must clear the reporting requirements proposed by most agencies including EPA. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** EPA management has not supported its own paperwork control system. EPA interpreted the Federal Reports Act as exempting some reporting requirements mandated by law from OMB control. As a result, EPA was constrained by organizational and operational weaknesses and was only marginally effective. Ultimately, businesses were subject to numerous reporting requirements that OMB had never approved. Every business or other facility with an EPA permit for discharging wastewater is required periodically to submit a discharge monitoring report to EPA. EPA was to use this report to check whether the permit holder stayed within approved pollutant limits. However, some of the regional offices did not review or use the monitoring reports of minor dischargers because the EPA policy was to emphasize enforcement of major dischargers' permits and because the offices lacked sufficient staff. Under the Clear Air Act regulations, importers of motor vehicles or motor vehicle engines must file an EPA declaration form on which they declare whether or not the import meets federal emission requirements or is exempt. The U.S. Customs Service investigated only 30 cases of alleged falsified information involving 62 vehicles. Burden hour estimates are an essential element in the OMB system for controlling paperwork. OMB uses the estimates to gauge the impact of a proposed requirement and, conversely, to measure progress in reducing paperwork. However, most of the EPA estimates are based on judgment, particularly those for complex requirements. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Director of OMB should revise OMB Circular A-40 to encourage use of pretests, especially for complex reporting requirements. The Administrator of EPA should direct the clearance officer to periodically evaluate the practical utility of EPA reporting requirements. The Administrator of EPA should direct the Office of the Inspector General to make periodic management audits of the efficacy of paperwork controls throughout the agency. The Administrator of EPA should change wastewater discharge permits for minor dischargers so that reporting schedules are consistent with EPA capability to use the information. The Administrator of EPA should change the requirements for the declaration form for imported motor vehicles and engines so that the form would apply only in those cases where the import is not in compliance with the applicable emission requirements, or when a Customs Service inspection reveals a possible violation of the requirements. The Administrator of EPA should provide the support necessary for those responsible for implementing the Paperwork Reduction Act to: (1) maintain centralized control over the reporting requirements imposed by the agency; (2) oversee the preparation and submission of clearance requests for all requirements that meet the clearance criteria; and (3) evaluate the technical quality of all proposed information collection plans and related questionnaires.

115814

Health and Safety Deficiencies Found at Water Recreation Areas. CED-81-88; B-203365. June 15, 1981. ***Released*** July 15, 1981. 14 pp. plus 4 appendices (14 pp.).
Report to Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; by John D. Heller, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Land Use Planning and Control: Federally-Owned and Federally-Supported Recreation Areas (2310).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Recreational Resources (303.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Army; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Department of the Interior; Department of the Interior: Water and Power Resources Service; Bureau of Reclamation.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations; *Sen.* Mark O. Hatfield.

Authority: Water Project Recreation Act. Safe Drinking Water Act (P.L. 93-523). Safe Drinking Water Amendments 1977 (P.L. 95-190). Flood Control Act of 1962.

Abstract: GAO was requested to review the health and safety conditions of nonfederally managed water recreation areas of the Corps of Engineers' and the Water and Power Resources Service's (WPRS) reservoirs. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found several types of health and safety deficiencies at the Corps and WPRS areas. These included: (1) poorly designed, overused, or malfunctioning sanitation systems; (2) structurally unsafe picnic and restroom facilities; (3) a dam spillway without a barrier; and (4) inadequate disinfection or filtration systems and excessive bacteria or turbidity levels in drinking water. Corps and WPRS headquarters recreation management officials stated that regular and thorough inspections are not conducted nor are local managing officials directed to make needed improvements. These officials stated that funding constraints make it difficult to effectively monitor the condition of nonfederally managed recreation areas. Nonfederal public agencies' officials acknowledged responsibility for operating and maintaining recreation areas in a safe and healthy condition but stated that they lacked adequate funds. These officials claim that operation and maintenance costs and visitor use have increased over the years but that recreation budgets have not kept pace. As a result, nonfederal agencies have turned over management of a number of areas to the federal agencies. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretaries of the Interior and the Army should review the status of returned recreation areas to determine whether areas with health and safety deficiencies should be improved, operated and maintained, posted as unsafe, or closed. The Secretaries of the Interior and the Army should seek necessary funds and authority from Congress to close or improve, operate, and maintain returned recreation areas and those service areas that were never turned over to a local manager. The Secretaries of the Interior and the Army should regularly and thoroughly inspect nonfederally managed Corps and WPRS recreation areas to identify health and safety deficiencies and require the managing agency to correct the identified deficiencies, post the areas as unsafe, or close them.

115815

Wyoming Wastewater Treatment Facility Proves Unsuccessful. CED-81-94; B-199267. June 15, 1981. ***Released*** July 15, 1981. 36 pp. plus 5 appendices (58 pp.).

Report to Rep. Richard B. Cheney; Sen. Malcolm Wallop; Sen. Alan K. Simpson; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Thayne, WY; Star Valley Cheese Corp.; Environmental Protection Agency: Office of the Inspector General; Environmental Protection Agency: Region VIII, Denver, CO.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee; *Rep.* Richard B. Cheney; *Sen.* Alan K. Simpson; *Sen.* Malcolm Wallop.
Authority: Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (P.L. 92-500). Clean Water Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-217).
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO investigated the circumstances surrounding the failure of the wastewater treatment facility in Thayne, Wyoming. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The $1.15 million facility is now being used by 106 sewage hookups in Thayne while the Star Valley Cheese Corporation (SVCC), for which the facility was principally designed, discharges its wastes directly into the local waterway. Throughout its history, the facility has been beset by problems. The spray irrigation system selected for the project was high-risk because it tended to ice up in the harsh winters and needed a high level of operation and maintenance. SVCC continually overloaded the facility's capacity to treat wastes. The project design was deficient in that both the storage pond and the land on which the treated wastewater was sprayed were too small. The construction company did a poor job: liners of the storage pond were improperly installed and the land receiving the sprayed water was improperly prepared. Operation and maintenance activities were neglected, and most of the new construction items provided for in a grant amendment were never installed. The system did not function properly to alleviate the severe odor problems caused by the SVCC high discharge levels. Because the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) did not adequately monitor the project: more than $11,000 in industrial cost recovery payments made by SVCC were not collected from Thayne; Thayne used 34 percent of the modification and repair funds for architectural and engineering services, an amount far in excess of the grant agreement; and EPA may have overpaid the construction, repair, and modification costs by about $95,000. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should require the Region VIII regional administrator to collect from Thayne the funds due the federal government for industrial cost recovery payments. The Administrator of EPA should require the EPA Inspector General to perform a comprehensive and detailed audit of all costs associated with the Thayne project. If ineligible or unsupported costs are found, EPA should recover these amounts.

115875

[Agency Procedures for Processing Dredging Permits]. July 22, 1981. 8 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Associate Director, Senior Level, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Environmental Protection Agency; United States Fish and Wildlife Service; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: National Marine Fisheries Service.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.
Abstract: A GAO review identified common delays and problems in the Corps of Engineers' dredging permit program and recommended ways to improve the process. An underlying reason for processing delays is the sharp increase in the number of laws and federal agencies involved with the dredging permit process. Although current laws emphasize the need to protect valuable resources, they affect timely permit processing. The agencies involved have finalized memorandums of agreement to help reduce commenting time and referral procedures for resolving agency differences. However, the success of these agreements will depend on the spirit of cooperation among the agencies and the ease with which time extensions and referrals are obtained. The Corps also encountered considerable delay during final processing. It is unrealistic to expect a large decrease in permit processing time without a major change in the process. The Corps has taken several steps to increase the timeliness in processing. However, its overall success is difficult to determine. Interagency coordination has been reported as being highly successful among the other agencies involved. Proposed legislation would authorize the Secretary of the Army to decide on dredging material disposal sites for maintenance operations, subject to congressional approval. This would limit the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to prohibit disposal of dredged material for environmental reasons. If the Corps determines that the incremental benefits of mitigating conditions do not justify the related cost, the conditions could be omitted from environmental impact statements. These changes could speed navigation improvement projects but reduce consideration of environmental issues. GAO believes that, at a minimum, all major differences between the Corps and EPA should be highlighted in the Secretary's submission to Congress for approval. Under the new legislation, the Corps will be required to complete in 1 year the environmental impact statement work necessary for all projects scheduled in the 5-year program. This will probably not provide time to adequately consider the environmental effects of these projects. The proposed legislation would require agencies to establish memorandums of agreement for interagency review and time periods in which to comment on maintenance projects and navigation improvement projects. GAO endorses these specific timeframes.

115908

Solid Waste Disposal Practices: Open Dumps Not Identified; States Face Funding Problems. CED-81-131; B-203891. July 23, 1981. ***Released*** July 28, 1981. 45 pp.

Report to Rep. Albert Gore, Jr.; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Materials: Interface Issues: Energy, Environment and Worker Health-Safety Factors Affecting Materials Availability (1816).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and

Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* Albert Gore, Jr.
Authority: Solid Waste Disposal Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-580). Safe Drinking Water Act (P.L. 93-523).
Abstract: GAO was requested to review the status of state solid waste management plans, the conduct of the open-dump inventory, and the impact of reduced funding on state solid waste activities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that over $47 million was awarded to states from October 1977 to March 1981 to develop state solid waste management plans and to conduct an open-dump inventory. However, plan development has been slow. No state plans have been approved by EPA as of June 1981. The open-dump inventory published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in late May 1981 is incomplete and is not the management tool intended to apprise Congress and the public of the overall magnitude of solid waste land disposal problems throughout the Nation. Funding for state grants is authorized through fiscal year (FY) 1982; the EPA proposed budget does not provide funding for FY 1982 because EPA expects the states' programs to be self-reliant and self-supporting by then. The States believe that, if additional federal funding is not provided, their solid waste efforts, including implementing the state solid waste management plans and continuing the open-dump inventory, will be significantly curtailed. EPA has encouraged the states to explore alternative funding sources to finance state programs as federal financial assistance was gradually being phased out. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should encourage the states to submit the names of all disposal facilities not meeting one or more of the EPA criteria for classifying disposal facilities. After receiving the data from the states, the Administrator should publish an inventory of all facilities which do not meet the EPA criteria. The Administrator of EPA should provide to all state solid waste management agencies comprehensive reports on those states that the Administrator believes have developed alternative sources of funding to the point that state solid waste management programs are considered self-reliant and self-supporting. Such reports can serve as guides to encourage all states to develop self-reliant and self-supporting solid waste management programs.

115982
[Allegations That a Political Appointee at the Environmental Protection Agency Was Exercising Control Over the Office of the Inspector General]. AFMD-81-77; B-203744. June 25, 1981. ***Released*** August 4, 1981. 4 pp.
Report to Rep. L.H. Fountain, Chairman, House Committee on Government Operations: Intergovernmental Relations and Human Resources Subcommittee; by Wilbur D. Campbell, Deputy Director, GAO Accounting and Financial Management Division.

Issue Area: Internal Auditing Systems: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0251).
Contact: Accounting and Financial Management Division.
Budget Function: Financial Management and Information Systems: Internal Audit (998.3).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Government Operations: Intergovernmental Relations and Human Resources Subcommittee; *Rep.* L.H. Fountain.
Authority: Inspector General Act of 1978.
Abstract: GAO was asked to investigate certain matters pertaining to a political appointee allegedly exercising control over the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Inspector General's office to determine: the background and qualifications of the appointee, the background of the employee who hired the appointee, the impressions left with the Office of Inspector General personnel as to the appointee's role in their office, the types of documents the appointee had access to and whether these documents were commonly disclosed during the Inspector General's work, and the date after which the appointee no longer worked in the Inspector General's office. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The appointee was hired as a 120-day temporary Schedule C appointee to provide personal and confidential assistance to the Administrator of EPA. His background included copyright and patent law experience, service as an FBI agent, and participation in several political campaigns. He served as an advance man for the Reagan/Bush campaign and worked on the inaugural committee. He was appointed to become familiar with the agency and to determine if his abilities would be appropriate for a position in the agency. The person who appointed him was a member of the transition team in EPA prior to being named Special Assistant to the Acting Administrator. The appointee was assigned to interview officials of the Office of the Inspector General to decide who should assume the role of Acting Inspector General. At that time, there was neither an Inspector General nor a Deputy Inspector General. The appointee devoted 5 working days to the Inspector General's office, interviewing several of the staff and was briefed on ongoing audits and investigations. He then recommended that the Assistant Inspector General for Audit assume the duties of the Inspector General. He also discussed office travel fund shortages with members of the staff. Officials of the office reported that they were left with the impression that the appointee would be the next Inspector General and thus gave him data which were not commonly given to individuals outside the office. Subsequently, the appointee was reassigned to the Office of Enforcement and has not been involved in Inspector General matters since that time.

116052
[Comments on Interior's Surface Mining Regulations]. CED-81-145; B-203769. August 5, 1981. 5 pp. plus 2 enclosures (13 pp.).
Report to James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Land Use Planning and Control: Effectiveness of Programs Designed To Promote and Regulate the Development, Rehabilitation, and Conservation of Nonpublic Lands and Related Resources (2314); Land Use Planning and Control: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2351).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of the Interior: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.
Authority: Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-87).
Abstract: GAO has been reviewing the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) regulations implementing the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO identified several issues which OSM should consider while it is revising its regulations. OSM needs to review its support for its revised blasting regulations concerning the use of explosives. Also, a legislative change may be needed to clarify the act's blast damage provision, which does not allow any building structure damage off the mine permit area. OSM needs to emphasize alternatives to bonding while revising its regulations to help small mine operators. Legislative changes may be needed to preserve prime farmlands by limiting the grandfather clause and land-use options. OSM design standards do not adequately address the differing climatological, geological, and topographical conditions of each coal mining area and thereby limit

state and coal mine operator flexibility in controlling sediment. The state regulatory authority could be allowed to decide, on a site-by-site basis, the best method of controlling sediment. A legislative change is needed to allow a site-by-site analysis to prevent acid water drainage. As excess spoil standards seem excessive, alternative methods of spoil material disposal should be considered. OSM needs to be cognizant of regulatory redundancy to prevent unnecessary regulation of mine access roads. The Department of the Interior should also consider whether OSM and the states have the monitoring, inspection, and enforcement resources to ensure compliance with the act and OSM regulations. The environment could be severely damaged by inadequate enforcement and coal operators put out of business by excessive regulation.

116152

Hazardous Waste Disposal: A Staggering Problem. 1981. 5 pp.
by Francis J. Polkowski, Senior Evaluator, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.
In the GAO Review, Vol. 16, Issue 3, Summer 1981, pp. 42-46.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Authority: Solid Waste Disposal Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510).
Abstract: A serious and potentially deadly problem is the growing volume of solid hazardous waste society produces. Less than 10 percent of the hazardous waste volume is disposed of in an environmentally safe manner. No part of the country is immune from the problem. Land disposal has been the predominant disposal method, but it presents the greatest health and environmental risk for surface and groundwater contamination. It has been considered the least expensive of the disposal methods, yet when long-term liability and cleanup costs are considered, the cost rises dramatically. When water comes in contact with disposed waste, it produces a heavily polluted liquid. The most populated and industrial parts of the country have the highest potential for contamination and the greatest disposal problem. Groundwater is the major drinking water source for 32 states, and for major parts of several states it is the only source. Burning hazardous waste in incinerators at high temperatures offers an alternative to land disposal. It reduces the volume of hazardous substances to nontoxic gaseous emissions, small amounts of ash, and other residues. This process can be 100 percent environmentally safe and offers the best environmentally safe disposal alternative for the most toxic substances other than nuclear waste. However, it is a relatively expensive method of waste disposal and can cause air pollution problems. Another alternative for waste disposal is deep-well disposal, which consists of injecting liquid wastes into permeable subterranean rock or other geological formations. The underground area receiving wastes should be isolated by impermeable rock. To allow this disposal method to work effectively, both government and industry would have to establish strict controls over the drilling technology used, monitor the drilling and operations, and limit the types of substances to be injected. Industry, the general public, and federal, state, and local governments have not confronted the totality of the waste problem facing the United States. The legislative actions needed to reverse the environmental decline that numerous years of improper disposal have created have not been fully considered by industry or Congress. Reliance on land disposal should be reduced and more facilities for high temperature burning and deep-well disposal should be provided.

116171

Simplifying the Federal Coal Management Program. EMD-81-109; B-169124. August 20, 1981. 5 pp. plus 1 appendix (23 pp.).
Report to James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Management of Leased Federal Lands (1629); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216); Land Use Planning and Control: Management of Public Lands To Optimize Public Benefits (2313).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior.
Authority: Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the Department of the Interior's regulations for the management of existing federal coal leases and preference right lease applications (PRLA's). The objective was to identify regulatory modifications that could simplify and ultimately enhance the timely and orderly development of coal on existing coal leases and PRLA's. The subjects of principal concern to GAO were: (1) the difficulties in implementing requirements for maximum economic recovery (MER); (2) the regulatory requirements for diligent development; (3) the designation of leases as logical mining units (LMU's); (4) duplication of effort in environmental review of coal mine plans; and (5) the lack of data needed to meet regulatory requirements for processing PRLA's. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that: (1) the existing and proposed regulations on MER were unnecessarily burdensome and almost impossible to administer; (2) the lack of flexibility in regulations directed at achieving more diligent development of existing federal coal leases could be adversely affecting certain leases; (3) many of the leases designated as LMU's do not qualify as such, and the Interior authority for making these designations is questionable; (4) in some instances, the mine plan review process was being reviewed by more than one organization, resulting in duplicate documents; and (5) the processing of many leases could be expedited by waiving certain regulations that were not in effect at the time the lease applications were submitted. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should direct that existing leases be formed into LMU's based on definitive criteria that consider owner's consent, tract size, and geology, rather than on arbitrary and universal criteria. The Secretary of the Interior should consider, in the analysis of coal leasing regulations, possible ways of eliminating costly and time consuming duplication in the environmental review process. The Secretary of the Interior should revise the PRLA regulations to eliminate the inherent conflicts and to provide for a more expeditious means of administering and disposing of the outstanding PRLA's. The Secretary of the Interior should redefine MER and examine the implementing regulations with a view toward keeping the regulations and their administration as simple as possible. The Secretary of the Interior should consider incorporating in Interior regulations provisions providing for relaxation of the diligence requirements when market conditions or other factors beyond the lessees' control make strict compliance with existing diligence requirements impractical.

116235

National Direction Required for Effective Management of America's Fish and Wildlife. CED-81-107; B-196756. August 24, 1981. 63 pp. plus 5 appendices (30 pp.).
Report to John R. Block, Secretary, Department of Agriculture; James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Land Use Planning and Control: Management of Federal Lands (2306); Water and Water Related Programs:

Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2551); Environmental Protection Programs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2251).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Recreational Resources (303.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Agriculture; Department of the Interior; United States Fish and Wildlife Service; Bureau of Land Management; Forest Service; National Park Service.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations.

Authority: Animal Damage Control Act of 1931 (7 U.S.C. 426 et seq.; 16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.; 16 U.S.C. 528 et seq.; 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.; 43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Estuarine Act (16 U.S.C. 1221 et seq.). Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.). Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.). Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (P.L. 96-487; 16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.; 94 Stat. 2371). Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act. White Act (Alaska Fisheries). Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960. Land Policy and Management Act. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

Abstract: GAO conducted a review of specific federal fish and wildlife programs to evaluate the overall effectiveness of federal agencies' management of fish and wildlife resources and habitat to ensure that development activities have the least possible adverse effect on fish and wildlife. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Several laws require federal agencies to seek the advice of the Fish and Wildlife Service on planned activities that may affect fish and wildlife. However, the Service is able to respond to only about half of these requests because of a lack of staff and funds. The Service has not established a priority system to identify and respond to those projects having the worst potential impact on fish and wildlife. Effective management of the National Wildlife Refuge System has been limited because the Service has not provided the needed guidance. The Service is also having problems managing the National Fish Hatchery System. It has not been able to establish and carry out national priorities for identifying which fish species to produce and which hatcheries to operate. Lack of direction and funding limitations contribute to this problem. For example, the National Wildlife Refuge and Fish Hatchery Systems have deteriorated to the point where there is a $650 million new development and rehabilitation backlog. The Service's current policy and attitudes stress conservation and protection of fish and wildlife, and this conflicts with the Animal Damage Control Act's original intent of predator control. The current program has not significantly reduced livestock losses caused by predators. Livestock insurance as an alternative was considered but was not feasible. Thus, managing the newly designated Alaskan federal lands presents a challenge between conservation and development interests. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should review the Fish and Wildlife Service's operations to determine whether its new priority system is effective in identifying those projects that have the greatest potential adverse impact on fish and wildlife. The Secretary of the Interior should establish policies, objectives, and guidance for an effective fish and wildlife research program. As part of this effort, the Secretary should consolidate the Fish and Wildlife Service's two research programs into one organizational unit. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to update the Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Refuge Manual and flyway management plans. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to establish priorities on the types of refuges and hatcheries that should be developed, operated, and maintained. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to determine which marginal refuges and hatcheries could be eliminated, propose a plan to the Senate and House Appropriations Committees setting forth the reasons why they should be discontinued, and seek approval from the Committees to close them. The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to review the condition of refuges and hatcheries and establish priorities for a rehabilitation program. Should the Animal Damage Control Program remain in Interior, the Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to develop and propose to Congress amendments to the Animal Damage Control Act of 1931 that reflect the current objectives of the Animal Damage Control Program to bring predators under control, rather than to eradicate, suppress, and destroy them. Should the Animal Damage Control Program remain in Interior, the Secretary of the Interior should direct the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks to determine whether the control program should: (1) be continued as is, or be modified to increase effectiveness; and (2) more fully explore alternatives such as livestock insurance to determine if they are viable. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should direct the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the Forest Service to give greater emphasis to conserving and managing fish and wildlife. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should enter into a cooperative agreement which will give the Fish and Wildlife Service the authority to decide how animals should be managed by other agencies in those instances where wildlife species migrate across the boundaries and are being managed by more than one federal agency. Such an agreement should also include the states where appropriate.

116296

Less Regulatory Effort Needed To Achieve Federal Coal Conversion Goals. EMD-81-71; B-201144. September 8, 1981. 30 pp. plus 1 appendix (1 p.).

Report to Sen. James A. McClure, Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Sen. Henry M. Jackson, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Refer to RCED-84-168, June 12, 1984, Accession Number 124510.

Issue Area: Energy: Making Better Use of the Nation's Vast Coal Reserves (1636); Environmental Protection Programs (2200).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy: Economic Regulatory Administration; Office of Technology Assessment.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Sen.* Henry M. Jackson; *Sen.* James A. McClure.

Authority: Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-620). Energy Supply and Environmental Coordination Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-319). Supplemental Appropriations and Rescission Act, 1981 (P.L. 97-12).

Abstract: GAO was asked to review the implementation of the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 to determine: (1) the status and likely achievements of the Federal regulatory program to convert utility boilers to coal; and (2) the prospects for the use of coal in large new industrial boilers as compared to oil or natural gas. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In its review, GAO found that, for existing boilers, utility efforts to voluntarily convert to coal have reduced the need for regulation and that, for new boilers, increased oil and gas prices have reduced the need for regulating purchases. In fact, if the 23 voluntary conversions are completed, about 235,000 barrels of oil per day will be saved. In addition, industry efforts to convert existing boilers have benefited from the air quality compliance requirements and procedures which allow accelerated coal burning at converting facilities and provide that conversions are not subject to certain air quality requirements. Therefore, GAO believes that the congressional action to replace the regulatory enforcement program with a voluntary conversion program and the action to reduce program funding were generally warranted. Additionally, GAO believes that there is some evidence concerning electric utilities that the preferred fossil fuel for new boiler purchases is coal rather than oil and gas. However, depressed sales of large industrial boilers during recent years preclude verification of the extent to which oil and gas will be chosen as fuel by other types of industrial companies. Consequently, the benefits of continued regulation of the fuels used in large new boilers are uncertain.

116297

Grain Fumigation: A Multifaceted Issue Needing Coordinated Attention. CED-81-152; B-204571. September 10, 1981. 17 pp.
Report to Thorne G. Auchter, Assistant Secretary for Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; Arthur Hull Hayes, Jr., Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration; C.W. McMillan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Agriculture; Nancy H. Steorts, Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Food: Need for Federal Actions in the Food Processing and Distribution Sectors (1725); National Productivity: Productivity for Common Government Functions (2902).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Agriculture (350.0); Health: Consumer and Occupational Health and Safety (554.0); Transportation (400.0).

Organization Concerned: Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Environmental Protection Agency; Food and Drug Administration; Department of Agriculture; Consumer Product Safety Commission; Department of Transportation; Department of Health and Human Services; Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group.

Abstract: Despite many years of using fumigants to eradicate insect pests from grain and grain products and despite the involvement of many government agencies in various facets of this activity, fumigant problems remain and much still needs to be learned about fumigants and their effects on vegetation, pests, and humans. A number of fumigant-related problems were identified by GAO, including the federal government's fragmented involvement in this area. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The work done by GAO disclosed that: (1) grain workers are exposed to potentially unsafe fumigant levels; (2) workers' concerns about health as a result of fumigant exposure have strained relations between some company and union officials and among other parties involved in shipping, handling, and storing grain; (3) potentially harmful fumigant residue has been found in some food products; and (4) a need exists for more knowledge about fumigants and their effects to either reduce current unwarranted anxiety levels or result in documented support for stronger, future precautionary measures. GAO further pointed out that the federal approach to the subject is fragmented; each agency often works independently without any one agency having a good overview of all that is going on. As a result, work may be duplicated among agencies, and lines of responsibility are not always clear. GAO believes that the Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group, established to allow participating agencies to work closely together on topics that cross agency lines, is a proper forum to bring various agencies together and provide the overseer role that is needed. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group should accept grain fumigation as a topic for its consideration. The Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group should assume the role of overseer of the fumigation area and publicize this role to its participating agencies and others. The Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group should address the problems discussed and any related issues.

116306

The Debate Over Acid Precipitation: Opposing Views and Status of Research. EMD-81-131; B-204447. September 11, 1981. 8 pp. plus 3 appendices (44 pp.).
Report to Sen. Wendell H. Ford; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Adequacy of Federal and State Efforts To Protect Human Health and the Environment From Air Pollution (2218); Energy: Effect of Government Regulations and Other Financial Measures on Energy Production and Use (1654); International Affairs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0651).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); International Affairs: Conduct of Foreign Affairs (153.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency; Council on Environmental Quality; Department of State.

Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Wendell H. Ford.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Energy Security Act (P.L. 96-294). Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1979 (P.L. 95-426).

Abstract: GAO undertook an analysis of the acid rain phenomenon by examining the current state of knowledge on the subject; the type of information that can be expected from the scientific work in progress; and the likely consequences for energy development, the environment, and economic development should regulatory action be taken now instead of waiting until more information is available. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Acid precipitation may be one of the most polarized yet least understood energy/environmental issues of the 1980's. Its implications for environmental quality and national energy policy may be profound and could have international implications. It is contended that acid precipitation is causing a wide range of damage to the environment and may indirectly damage human health. Many environmental interests have called for immediate adoption of more stringent emission controls, especially for coal-fired powerplants. Coal interests, utility industries, and some researchers have claimed that there is little scientific basis to substantiate these causes and effects. Broad agreement exists that certain areas in and around lakes are particularly vulnerable to acidification and that some lakes and streams in these areas are becoming increasingly acidic. However, present levels of aquatic damage are widely disputed. Damage to forests, crops, and soils is far less documented. Most acknowledge that acid precipitation can damage man-made materials such as buildings, statuary, metals, and surface finishes. There is no firm evidence that acid precipitation has affected human health by causing contamination of drinking water and edible fish. Participants in the debate disagree on whether the acidity of precipitation has been increasing, the sources of the pollution, and the efficacy of the research models.

116386

[Marine Discharge Waivers for Publicly Owned Wastewater Treatment Facilities]. September 8, 1981. 11 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Associate Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.
Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal).
Abstract: The Clean Water Act allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to grant waivers to publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities so that they can discharge primary treated municipal wastes into the marine environment when it can be shown that costly secondary treatment is not necessary. EPA has not yet made any waiver decisions but estimates that $1.5 billion in federal, state, and local construction costs could be saved if all 70 of the final applicants were given waivers. GAO identified hundreds of additional potential waiver applicants who have been prevented from applying for waivers because of legislative restraints and restrictive EPA regulations. As a result, billions of dollars may be wasted on unneeded but federally required secondary treatment facilities since the federal government usually pays 75 percent of eligible construction costs. GAO estimates of potential construction cost savings range from $4 billion to $10 billion depending on whether waivers are applied to communities that have only domestic wastes or whether they apply to communities with both domestic and industrial wastes. Small communities, especially those that have little or no industrial wastes, would be the most logical communities to receive secondary treatment waivers as they have a relatively small volume of waste discharge, the wastes discharged are often nontoxic, and generally these communities have greater difficulty paying for pollution control improvements than larger communities. EPA could promptly grant waivers for small communities where the degree of risk to the environment is low and apply more rigorous waiver requirements for larger dischargers who have industrial wastes. Thus, Congress should amend the act to make the provisions for filing waiver applications less restrictive.

116392

[Unresolved Issues Resulting From Changes in DOE's Synthetic Fuels Commercialization Programs]. EMD-81-128; B-202463. August 17, 1981. ***Released*** September 15, 1981. 3 pp. plus 2 enclosures (14 pp.).
Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Improving Energy Organization and Decisionmaking (1638); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216); Procurement of Major Systems: Improving Management Oversight of Technology Base Activities (3008).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; United States Synthetic Fuels Corp.; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.
Authority: Energy Security Act. Clean Air Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. Defense Production Act of 1950. Nonnuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974.
Abstract: GAO examined the changes in the Department of Energy's (DOE) synthetic fuels programs for coal liquefaction, coal gasification, and oil shale. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** DOE, under a congressionally sanctioned interim synthetic fuels program, has recently reached agreement to support three industry proposals aimed at commercial production of synthetic fuels. The Administration proposes to eliminate the DOE synthetic fuels commercialization activities and transfer the interim program to the U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation (SFC) which is consistent with the intent of the Energy Security Act of 1980. With the elimination of DOE commercialization activities, the Administration is relying on industry, with assistance from SFC, to develop synthetic fuels. In addition, the Administration proposes to eliminate DOE demonstration functions and cut back substantially on pilot plant activities. The Administration views the role of DOE in synthetic fuels as being limited to long-term, high-risk, and high-payoff research and development (R&D). However, GAO found that specific definitions do not exist for these terms. In the environmental area, GAO found that the DOE health and environmental research work associated with pilot and demonstration plants may also be reduced. Because SFC is required to approve the environmental and health-related emission monitoring plans, GAO believes that it has the ultimate responsibility for defining an acceptable monitoring plan. However, GAO believes that DOE and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have a responsibility to officially communicate their needs for project emission data to the project sponsors and SFC. SFC has indicated that no policy matters will be dictated until it has a Board of Directors. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Energy should establish definitions for long-term, high-risk, high-payoff programs and direct that they be consistently applied to funding current and future R&D projects. The Chairman, SFC, should invite comments on the proposed guidance from all interested parties including DOE, EPA, and state environmental agencies. The Chairman, SFC, should publish final guidance, after confirmation of a Board of Directors, which considers the comments. The Chairman, SFC, should publish guidance for implementation of Section 131(e) of the Energy Security Act. This guidance should include: (1) who should initiate the contracts between the project sponsors and DOE, EPA, and state agencies; (2) when the initial contracts should occur; and (3) how the SFC will negotiate and reach agreement on acceptable environmental monitoring systems.

116485

Consumers Need More Reliable Automobile Fuel Economy Data. CED-81-133; B-203958. July 28, 1981. ***Released*** September 15, 1981. 26 pp.
Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Transportation Systems and Policies: Determining the Effectiveness of Federal Efforts To Implement Motor Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards (2421); Energy: Relevance and Usefulness of Federal Energy Information Programs (1639).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Transportation: Ground Transportation (401.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Transportation; Federal Trade Commission.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.
Authority: Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7525). Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act (15 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.). H. Rept. 96-948.

Abstract: Since 1976, purchasers of new automobiles in the United States have relied on fuel economy test data to help choose fuel-efficient vehicles. Under a fuel economy labeling program administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in cooperation with the Departments of Transportation and Energy and the Federal Trade Commission, every automobile manufactured for sale and use in the United States is required to display a label showing its tested fuel economy, its estimated annual fuel costs, and the fuel economy range of comparable vehicles. Since the program began, there have been complaints of discrepancies between the EPA fuel economy test results and consumers' reported on-road fuel economy. GAO was asked to determine why these discrepancies exist, whether better measures of fuel economy can be developed, and whether better ways of disseminating this information to consumers can be devised. *Findings/Conclusions:* Differences between the EPA figures and drivers' on-road mileage figures result from many factors including variances in travel environments, driver habits, vehicle conditions, and design changes. In addition to these factors, discrepancies which are caused either by the test procedures themselves or by automobile advertising have caused consumers to become increasingly skeptical of the program. EPA proposes to revise the fuel economy labeling program by, among other things, adjusting the test values to better represent the gas mileage consumers are obtaining on the road. Its proposal includes a plan to apply an adjustment factor to each automobile label value which would account for the average discrepancy between the fuel economy test results and consumers' on-road data. Although manufacturers generally support this plan, some are concerned over how the factor should be calculated. Recent studies comparing the fuel economy test results with on-road experience indicate that separate adjustment factors may be required to reflect new automobile technologies. However, more research data are needed before any definite conclusions can be drawn on how changing technologies could affect the adjustment factors. Further, if proposed EPA revisions to the fuel economy labeling program become effective, education programs will be needed to adequately inform consumers of the program adjustments and limitations.

116516
Coal and Nuclear Wastes--Both Potential Contributors to Environmental and Health Problems. EMD-81-132; B-204622. September 21, 1981. 3 pp. plus 3 appendices (25 pp.).
Report to Rep. Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Environmental Implications for Meeting Future Electrical Energy Demands (1657); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220); Science and Technology: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2051).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; *Rep.* Richard L. Ottinger.
Authority: Clean Air Act.
Abstract: GAO was asked to compare the waste products from the coal and nuclear fuel cycles. The purpose of the report was to provide a perspective on both coal and nuclear wastes by presenting information on: (1) the amounts and types of wastes being generated at each step of the coal and nuclear fuel cycle, and (2) the environmental and health impact associated with these wastes. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO relied primarily on existing literature supplemented by interviews with officials of the appropriate federal agencies. Overall, the literature confirmed that wastes produced by both fuel cycles present a potential for significant environmental and health hazards. Since coal and nuclear wastes present different types of hazards and the information available on these wastes is not comparable, GAO did not believe that it was possible to determine if either waste type is more of a hazard than the other. Nonetheless, several comparisons of the waste amounts, potential hazards, and past environmental and health effects resulting from each respective fuel cycle can be made that provide a perspective on the individual hazards of each waste type. In short, GAO found that: (1) the coal fuel cycle produces significantly more wastes in volume than the nuclear fuel cycle; (2) coal wastes are continually released in the environment, but the resulting health effects are not fully understood; (3) nuclear wastes are significantly more toxic and radioactive than coal wastes and could pose more of a potential hazard to the environment and public health in the event of an accident; (4) nuclear wastes have been more tightly controlled and regulated than coal wastes and, therefore, have resulted in less environmental damage; and (5) most of the hazards from both coal and nuclear wastes can be lessened, or in some cases eliminated, if properly controlled and regulated.

116558
[Financial and Operational Problems at Three Mile Island]. September 22, 1981. 28 pp. plus 1 appendix (2 pp.) plus 1 attachment (1 p.).
Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.
Refer to EMD-80-89, July 7, 1980, Accession Number 113012; and EMD-81-106, August 26, 1981, Accession Number 116218.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Organization Concerned: General Public Utilities Corp.; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee.
Authority: Price-Anderson Act (Atomic Energy Damages).
Abstract: GAO was asked to respond to several issues concerning H.R. 2512 as it relates to cleanup activities at Three Mile Island (TMI) following the nuclear radiation leak there. H.R. 2512 encompasses two critical issues stemming from the TMI accident, increased insurance coverage and cleanup funding, both of which need immediate resolution. Passage of H.R. 2512 is premature and requires establishing an organization that is not needed. The current proposal for funding the cleanup needs to be given an opportunity to be developed. Total costs for cleanup are estimated to be about $1,034 billion, with an estimated $570 million unfunded balance expected at the end of 1981. The Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing an extensive multiyear research and development effort. GAO believes that this is a worthwhile program, will greatly benefit both the federal regulatory agencies and the utility industry, and should be accorded full congressional support. To date, General Public Utilities Corporation (GPU) customers have not been charged with any of the cleanup costs. However, customers have had to pay $202 million more than they would have if the accident had not happened because higher cost replacement energy was required to economically meet system needs. With few exceptions, all accident cleanup costs have been paid from insurance proceeds. No entity other than GPU shareholders has provided any direct financial assistance. Indirect costs to federal agencies will total about $275 million by the end of 1981. Further, GAO found no reason why the reactor core should not be removed as expeditiously as possible. While posing no immediate safety hazard, the current status of the reactor has the elements for additional safety problems.

Thus, early core removal would be economically advantageous to both GPU and its customers. GAO believes that the single most important step to adequately finance any future accident recovery effort is to increase the present level of property insurance coverage. While it appears the private sector will be able to achieve this, the responsibility for determining adequate levels of coverage and the best way to do it rest with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. An improved regulatory climate at both federal and state levels could help reduce future costs by reducing the time for cleanup activities.

116644

Stronger Enforcement Needed Against Misuse of Pesticides. CED-82-5; B-200588. October 15, 1981. 35 pp. plus 4 appendices (61 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs (2200); Consumer and Worker Protection (0900).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Health and Human Services; Food and Drug Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Agriculture; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; Congress.

Authority: Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.). Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

Abstract: GAO reviewed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state pesticide programs to enforce pesticide laws and suggested ways to improve program activities. GAO also reviewed special pesticide registrations to determine if some of the problems identified in an earlier GAO report had been corrected. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Although improvements have been made in recent years, GAO found that the public may not always be protected from pesticide misuse because EPA and the states: sometimes take questionable enforcement actions against violators, have not implemented adequate program administration and monitoring, and are approving the use of pesticides for special local and emergency needs which may be circumventing the normal pesticide registration procedures of EPA. Enforcement programs do not always protect the public and the environment because many enforcement actions are questionable or inconsistent, some cases are poorly investigated, state agencies often do not share the EPA enforcement philosophy, and most states lack the ability to impose civil penalties. The majority of states have improved their pesticide laws, purchased new equipment to upgrade laboratories, hired additional staff, and conducted more inspections. However, EPA and the states have not developed adequate management information to document pesticide enforcement activities. EPA monitoring of state programs has been limited and directed at administrative aspects rather than evaluations of the adequacy of enforcement actions. There is a lack of quick and effective processing of misuse cases referred between EPA and the states and between EPA and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) because of inadequate recordkeeping systems, lack of followup actions by the referring agency, and untimely enforcement actions. New EPA reporting requirements are a first step in providing a basis for evaluating the quality of enforcement ac ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should direct EPA regional office inspectors to emphasize the importance of conducting proper investigations and taking appropriate enforcement actions. The Administrator of EPA should take action to help the states improve the quality of investigations and enforcement actions. This could include providing additional inspection and enforcement guidelines. The Administrator of EPA should encourage the passage of state laws which provide authority for assessing civil penalties. This could include an outreach effort through the EPA regions with letters to State Governors and key legislators. The EPA Administrator should require EPA regional offices and states to improve recordkeeping and reporting systems so that accurate, complete, and timely data are generated and information on program results is provided. The EPA Administrator should establish standards for increasing the frequency and scope of onsite monitoring to ensure state compliance with regulations and to evaluate the quality of investigations and enforcement action. The EPA Administrator should strengthen coordination with FDA and improve management controls over referrals to ensure appropriate and expeditious investigations and enforcement actions. The Secretary of Health and Human Services, through the Commissioner, FDA, should improve management controls over referrals and strengthen coordination with EPA to help assure that investigations and enforcement actions are properly carried out. This could include requiring FDA to document pesticide misuse cases that it refers to EPA and establishing a system to monitor the status of cases referred. The Administrator of EPA should review each similar special local need registration to ensure that products or additional uses are being properly registered by the states. The Administrator of EPA should develop an information system which identifies emergency exemptions by state so that repetitive requests can be analyzed and reviewed for conformance with Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act guidelines. The Administrator of EPA should notify states that repetitive emergency exemptions will not be approved unless their justifications are fully documented. The Administrator of EPA should require the EPA Registration Division, regional offices, and state offices to better coordinate experimental-use monitoring. This could include a requirement that requesters of experimental-use permits notify EPA regional and state officials when they actually plan to conduct their experiments.

116651

Mining on National Park Service Lands--What Is at Stake? EMD-81-119; B-202398. September 24, 1981. 42 pp. plus 4 appendices (8 pp.).

Report to Rep. James D. Santini, Chairman, House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Mines and Mining Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Refer to EMD-81-119S, December 14, 1981, Accession Number 117097.

Issue Area: Materials: Materials Resource Base (1815).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; National Park Service; Bureau of Land Management; Department of the Interior: Bureau of Mines; Department of the Interior: Geological Survey; National Park Service: Death Valley National Monument; National Park Service: Glacier Bay National Monument.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Mines and Mining Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Rep.* James D. Santini.

Authority: Mining in the Parks Act (P.L. 94-429). National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980. Land Policy and Management Act. Mining and

Minerals Policy Act of 1970. Defense Production Act of 1950. Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act.

Abstract: The Mining in the Parks Act prohibited further mineral exploration in six National Park Service (NPS) areas and placed environmental restrictions on development of existing mining claims in these areas. The act also required the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress studies of the environmental consequences of mining in these areas accompanied by estimated acquisition costs of mining claims. GAO reviewed the adequacy of the reports submitted and looked at the NPS management of present mining operations in the park areas and the Department of the Interior's analysis of the mineral policy implications of the act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that Interior's reports do not provide Congress with the information that it needs to weigh the environmental effects of mining against the cost of acquiring claims in the NPS areas. The environmental reports on mining in Death Valley and Glacier Bay National Monuments are so vague that they are of little use for determining the possible environmental impacts of mining in these areas. They contain little or no discussions of the steps that could be taken to minimize adverse impacts and thereby lessen the need to acquire certain mining claims. Additionally, the acquisition cost estimates submitted to Congress to purchase certain mining claims were not supported by sufficient documentation and were unreliable and misleading. As a result, much disagreement exists as to the worth of the mining claims recommended for acquisition. Further, GAO found that Interior did not perform a thorough analysis of the need and costs of acquiring mineral properties in Death Valley and Glacier Bay National Monuments. GAO believes that the recommendations based on the environmental data submitted to Congress by Interior for the acquisition of the properties could result in court awards substantially in excess of Interior's acquisition cost estimates. In addition, GAO found that Interior has not adequately analyzed the mineral policy implications of the act. Therefore, the potential long-term effects on mineral resources remains unanswered. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should consider the need for the federal government to acquire additional information regarding the mineral potential of the Death Valley National Monument area. This information could be used for any future land use decision regarding the monument. In order to better understand the economic consequences of limiting mineral production in the monument area, Congress should consider returning the supply and marketing studies concerning borate and talc minerals developed by Interior for revision and updating. Congress should base no decision on the Secretary of the Interior's recommendations submitted in 1979 to acquire mineral properties in Death Valley and Glacier Bay National Monuments. Before taking any action, Congress should await new recommendations by the Secretary based on more adequate analysis. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should notify Congress that Interior no longer supports the recommendations made in 1979 to Congress to acquire certain valid unpatented and patented mining claims in Death Valley and Glacier Bay National Monuments. The Secretary of the Interior should reexamine the need to acquire any mining claims in Death Valley and Glacier Bay National Monuments based on the progress to date in regulating mining activities to prevent adverse environmental effects and submit new recommendations to Congress. The Secretary of the Interior should ensure that any future recommendations to Congress to acquire mineral properties on National Park Service lands be made only after determining what is at stake for all aspects of the public interest. Any recommendations should be based on site-specific analysis, acquisition cost estimates based on the best information available, and mineral supply and marketing analyses. This information should be developed in coordination with other pertinent Interior agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Mines, and the U.S. Geological Survey to ensure a consistent Department policy position. In addition, a description of the methodologies and supporting data used to develop the information and any limitations on the use of that information should accompany the recommendations. The Secretary of the Interior should amend sections 9.9 and 9.10 of the regulations for mining on National Park Service lands to include an economic evaluation of the changes required for mining plan approval. The Secretary of the Interior should remove the mineral management functions, including the mineral examination function, from the National Park Service. The Secretary of the Interior should consider the need to consolidate all of the Interior mineral management functions under a single Assistant Secretary.

116665

[Financial and Operational Problems at Three Mile Island]. October 20, 1981. 27 pp. plus 1 appendix (2 pp.) plus 1 enclosure (1 p.).

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works: Nuclear Regulation Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Refer to EMD-80-89, July 7, 1980, Accession Number 113012; and EMD-81-106, August 26, 1981, Accession Number 116069.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; General Public Utilities Corp.; Environmental Protection Agency; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Pennsylvania; New Jersey.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Nuclear Regulation Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Authority: S. 1606 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: S. 1606 addresses two critical issues made evident by the Three Mile Island (TMI) accident which need immediate resolution: the need for increased insurance coverage, and cleanup funding. Passage of the proposed legislation is premature, however, because it requires federal involvement that is not needed at this time. Several alternative proposals should be given the opportunity to be developed. The Department of Energy has proposed an extensive multiyear research and development effort at TMI. GAO believes that this is a worthwhile program and will greatly benefit both the federal regulatory agencies and the utility industry. Utility customers have not been charged with any of the cleanup costs to date. However, customers have had to pay more than they would have if the accident had not happened because higher cost replacement energy was required to meet the system needs. With few exceptions, all accident cleanup costs to date have been paid from insurance proceeds. No entity other than the utility company shareholders has provided any direct financial assistance. However, indirect costs to federal agencies as a result of the accident will total about $275 million by the end of 1981. GAO found no reason why the reactor core should not be removed as expeditiously as possible. While posing no immediate safety hazard, the current status of the reactor has the elements for additional safety problems. The single most important step to adequately finance any future accident recovery effort is to increase the present level of property insurance coverage. While it appears that the private sector will be able to achieve this, the responsibility for determining adequate levels of coverage and the best way to do it rests with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. An improved regulatory climate at both federal and state levels could help reduce future costs by reducing the time for cleanup activities.

116678

[Views on the Proposed Bill for Forestland Vegetation Management]. B-203506. October 19, 1981. 2 pp.

Letter to Rep. James H. Weaver, Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.
Organization Concerned: Bureau of Land Management; Forest Service.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Agriculture: Forests, Family Farms and Energy Subcommittee; *Rep.* James H. Weaver.
Authority: H.R. 2900 (97th Cong.).
Abstract: GAO was requested to comment on a proposed bill for forestland vegetation management. The bill would promote forestry employment and the safe use of herbicides on public forest lands managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The comments were based on a review of the Forest Service's and Bureau's use of herbicides in their vegetation management programs and a prior GAO report. In the review, GAO concentrated on the agencies' vegetation management activities at two forest management stages: site preparation and release. It is at these stages in managing a forest that herbicides are generally used. The bill would require the Forest Service and the Bureau to institute stricter guidelines on the use of herbicides in their vegetation management programs and, as GAO recommended in the report, would require them to obtain better information before deciding on treatment and the method of treatment. The bill requires site-specific determination of the need for vegetation management programs. However, information gaps exist on both the cost and the relative effectiveness of various options available to carry out site preparation and release work. A particular concern is that, in those forests and districts relying heavily on herbicides, the decisionmakers do not have adequate empirical data on the nonherbicide alternatives, thereby making meaningful comparative analyses difficult or impossible. Because this bill represented proposed new legislation rather than an amendment of existing legislation, GAO suggested that sections be added authorizing the issuance of regulations and rules necessary to implement its provisions.

116699

Hazardous Waste Facilities With Interim Status May Be Endangering Public Health and the Environment. CED-81-158; B-204873. September 28, 1981. ***Released*** October 7, 1981. 28 pp. plus 2 appendices (3 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.
Abstract: When the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act was enacted, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was directed to develop regulations governing hazardous waste facilities. After much delay, EPA finally issued interim status requirements outlining minimum national requirements. GAO was requested to determine: (1) the extent to which facilities with interim status meet the EPA requirements; (2) whether the requirements developed by EPA are sufficient to protect the public health and welfare; and (3) how effectively and thoroughly EPA is monitoring and enforcing these requirements. The review focused on activities performed by EPA and six selected states. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that: (1) not all facilities which store, treat, or dispose of hazardous waste were included by the interim status process or that facilities with interim status meet the regulations and requirements; (2) the regulations that were issued were largely administrative and nontechnical and were not intended to provide complete health and environmental protection; and (3) monitoring and enforcement of the regulations has been limited in that only a limited number of inspections have been performed by EPA and the states, the inspections resulted primarily in the issuance of compliance orders for administrative violations, and the number and amounts of fines levied have been small. EPA performed little follow-up to determine if all existing hazardous waste facilities, required by regulations, submitted applications. The interim status application process was not designed to determine compliance with the regulations and requirements, and the applications sought little information which could have been useful to EPA in determining problem areas and inspection needs. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should direct that additional follow-up be made to identify that all facilities subject to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and that treat, store, or dispose of hazardous waste are included in the interim status control program. The Administrator of EPA should direct that additional review be made of the interim status application data provided by the facilities and, where necessary, clarifying information be obtained to identify facilities warranting additional investigative effort. The Administrator of EPA should direct that a determination be made as to the additional staffing needs, if any, for the interim status program and that options be developed as to how such staff can be obtained. The Administrator of EPA should direct that increased emphasis be placed on enforcement efforts including emphasis on technical violations at interim status facilities so that assurances can be provided that hazardous waste facilities meet at least minimum national requirements for hazardous waste management. The Administrator of EPA should direct that the level of inspections needed for full implementation of the EPA enforcement role and the necessary staff assistance to carry out the enforcement role be determined.

116885

[Agent Orange]. November 18, 1981. 11 pp.
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs; by Robert A. Peterson, Senior Associate Director, GAO Human Resources Division.

Contact: Human Resources Division.
Organization Concerned: Veterans Administration; University of California, Los Angeles, CA.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
Authority: P.L. 96-151. P.L. 97-72.
Abstract: GAO has reviewed the draft protocol for epidemiological studies of Agent Orange submitted to the Veterans Administration (VA) by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) researchers it and believes that: (1) the proposed feasibility study to determine troop exposures would be costly with no guarantee that it would identify a population of ground troops with measurable exposure, and would delay the start of the epidemiology study; (2) the data bases that the UCLA researchers propose using for the mortality and morbidity studies may contain inadequate or inaccurate information which could limit the

usefulness of these studies; and (3) there are serious questions about the possible adverse affects of exposure to Agent Blue and other chemicals used in Vietnam. Expansion of the epidemiology study to determine whether service in Vietnam, rather than solely exposure to Agent Orange, may have adversely affected the health of Vietnam veterans would eliminate the need for the costly and time consuming feasibility study and, at the same time, eliminate the need for future studies on the health effects of Agent Blue and other chemicals used in Vietnam. This approach would alleviate the two most serious problems which the UCLA researchers have identified in their proposed study: developing individual exposure estimates; and assessing the impact of confounding factors, such as exposure to other chemicals. GAO continues to believe that scientific study of personnel who served in Vietnam would be most valuable to VA and others in determining if veterans who served in Vietnam are experiencing health problems resulting from their service.

116900

Hazards of Past Low-Level Radioactive Waste Ocean Dumping Have Been Overemphasized. EMD-82-9; B-204946. October 21, 1981. ***Released*** November 23, 1981. 26 pp. plus 1 appendix (1 p.).

Report to Sen. William V. Roth, Jr.; by Milton J. Socolar, (for Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General).

Refer to RCED-83-45, December 17, 1982, Accession Number 120388.

Issue Area: Energy: Actions To Reduce Risks of Nuclear Fuel Cycle (1623); Environmental Protection Programs: Seriousness of Radiation (2262).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Oceanography Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Sen.* William V. Roth, Jr.

Authority: Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-532).

Abstract: GAO evaluated the environmental and public health consequences of past ocean dumping of low-level radioactive waste. Its report discussed federal efforts to identify the extent of past ocean dumping, ensure that it poses neither an environmental nor public health hazard, and ensure that any possible future dumping is conducted safely and in an environmentally acceptable manner. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the federal government has no complete and accurate catalog of information on how much, what kind, and where low-level nuclear waste was dumped because detailed records were not required. An overwhelming body of scientific research and opinion shows that concerns over the potential public health and environmental consequences posed by past ocean dumping activity are unwarranted and overemphasized. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been slow in developing low-level radioactive waste ocean dumping regulations. Although its current approach is sound, improvements are needed in developing specific dumpsite monitoring requirements. The EPA program for developing ocean dumping regulations has been based primarily on monitoring prior dumpsites. The EPA program could be improved if the agency recognized the limited benefits of monitoring prior dumpsites and fully utilized the results of extensive research and international experience with the ocean disposal of low-level radioactive waste instead of relying on the results of agency-funded research projects and studies. Monitoring prior dumpsites is limited because of the lack of baseline data on the amounts of natural fallout-related radioactivity in the oceans, the small volume of low-level radioactive waste dumped at sea, and a lack of information on the specific contents and locations of the waste that has already been dumped. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** In addition to embracing the internationally established guidance, the Administrator of EPA should develop specific criteria for dumpsite monitoring and periodic monitoring requirements for all future dumpsites. The Administrator of EPA should terminate the ongoing dumpsite inventory project now being done by EPA staff. This action would recognize the numerous limitations of the information contained in the federal records and avoid more elaborate searches for information which is nonessential to determining the consequences of past ocean dumping activities.

116917

[Information on a Hazardous Waste Facility Containing Chromium Lead Sludge]. CED-82-13; B-204873. November 9, 1981. ***Released*** November 24, 1981. 4 pp.

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.).

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO investigated a hazardous waste facility at which chromium lead sludge was being deposited in a wetland area as part of a hazardous waste disposal operation. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The facility, which has been landfilling chromium lead sludge for 11 years, is located in a marshy area with an underground clay layer. This layer provides for the lateral flow of water or leachate from the facility to an adjoining lake connected to Lake Michigan. The chromium lead sludge disposed of at the facility is brought there from a steel plant and is comprised of residues from a steel finishing process. A 1981 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) inspection revealed that the facility was in compliance with only 4 of the 48 interim status standards. Compliance could not be determined for the 44 remaining standards because records or plans were not available or could not be provided. The facility does not have a permit as required by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and has been referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office for prosecution. At the time the facility applied for interim status, it disclosed on the application that chromium lead sludge was being disposed of at the facility. Prior to the GAO inspection, the application was revised to describe the residues being disposed of as those of a process using lime rather than lead. A local disposal permit was granted to the facility for land disposal of inert residues from pollution devices. However, the permit did not allow for the disposal of liquid or toxic and hazardous materials. Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the facility has interim status, and EPA considers it to be legally operating.

116957

User Charge Revenues for Wastewater Treatment Plants--Insufficient To Cover Operation and Maintenance. CED-82-1; B-198742. December 2, 1981. 30 pp. plus 1 appendix (5 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectively and Efficiently Achieving Environmental Protection Objectives (2202); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Other Alternatives--Costs and Benefits of Credit Assistance (4020).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.
Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). P.L. 84-600.
Abstract: Billions of dollars in federal grants have been made to municipalities throughout the nation to construct publicly owned wastewater treatment plants. Once the plants are constructed, municipalities are responsible for raising sufficient monies from system users to properly operate and maintain these plants. GAO made a review to determine whether user charge revenues collected by municipalities are sufficient to properly operate and maintain the treatment plants; whether such costs are fairly and equitably distributed among system users; and whether sufficient revenues are being generated to pay for replacing major capital items in the plants. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO found that half of the 36 municipal treatment plants randomly selected for review were not charging users enough to cover operation and maintenance costs and were relying on other municipal revenue sources for funds. Also, 40 percent were not charging all users their fair and equitable share of costs. Thus, the future successful operation of the costly treatment facilities may be in jeopardy, and the nation's clean water goals may not be achieved. Replacing the thousands of federally funded plants will require billions of dollars. Current federal legislation is silent on the sources of funds for plant replacement. Only three of the municipalities reviewed are now setting aside replacement funds. Twenty-three indicated that they would return to the federal government for replacement funding. The need to eventually replace major equipment items can significantly strain local financial resources. Inequitable user charge systems allow a few users to benefit while many users pay excessive charges. GAO believes that such subsidies violate a basic intent of the user charge concept, equity. Fifteen of the 36 municipalities had not met the grant requirement of making a periodic review and of updating their user rates and classes to meet increased costs or changing operating conditions. Neither the Environmental Protection Agency nor the states have follow-up programs to verify a municipality's compliance with user charge grant conditions, and no enforcement program exists under which penalties could be assessed for noncompliance. *Recommendation To Congress:* Congress should consider whether there will be further federal participation in treatment plant replacement or whether plant replacement will become the responsibility of state and/or local governments. If Congress should decide that state and/or local governments are to be held responsible, these governments must be made aware of this requirement so that they can begin planning for such future expenditures. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should incorporate, as part of the financial management guidance package, instructions to the municipalities that clearly state: (1) the purpose of the user charge program; (2) that, except for ad valorem taxes, direct user charges are the only source of funding authorized for financing treatment plant operation and maintenance expenses; (3) the need to review and revise the user charge system in accordance with federal regulations and the grant agreement; and (4) the need to maintain the treatment plants' financial integrity and self-sufficiency as envisioned by Congress. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should incorporate, as part of existing operation and maintenance inspections and closeout financial audits of construction grants, a review of user charge system adequacy, including a review of the adequacy of reserve accounts for replacing major pieces of equipment considered essential for continued plant operations. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should incorporate the user charge system requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program.

116998

[Approaches Toward Valuation of Human Life by Certain Federal Agencies]. PAD-82-21; B-204658. November 9, 1981. ***Released*** December 8, 1981. 9 pp.
Report to Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Issue Area: Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches (4000); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Benefits, Costs, and Other Impacts of Regulation and the Approximate Regulatory Alternatives (4010).
Contact: Program Analysis Division.
Budget Function: Health (550.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Agriculture; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Labor; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Department of Transportation; Consumer Product Safety Commission.
Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Thomas F. Eagleton.
Authority: Black Lung Benefits Act of 1972 (30 U.S.C. 901 et seq.).
Abstract: GAO conducted a survey of federal agencies responsible for public health and safety to ascertain whether they assign a specific dollar valuation to human life and safety in analyzing program and regulation costs and benefits. *Findings/Conclusions:* The survey of a number of government agencies with responsibility for health and safety regulation indicates that they have little in common in how they assign dollar values to premature death, injury, or illness. The survey revealed that, while most agencies do not use explicit valuations as a matter of policy, many have used such values in specific analyses. The Centers for Disease Control have used a variety of figures as proxies for the economic costs and benefits associated with disease and disease prevention. The Mine Safety and Health Administration has used a value of $165,000 per case avoided in measuring the benefits and costs of its Respirable Coal Dust in Mines Regulation. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission assigns a value of $5 million per premature death. Agencies in the Department of Transportation have traditionally used explicit values in evaluating the economic benefits and costs of accident prevention programs based on airline settlements of wrongful death suits. The total cost of injuries is estimated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission for each of a variety of product types. Even when policymakers do not make explicit valuations, the outcomes of budgetary and regulatory policymaking reveal implicit valuations. Benefit-cost analyses underestimate benefits, particularly those for health and safety; tell the policymaker nothing about the other implications of choices even within the program area; and present the benefits and costs of programs in terms of their present discounted values.

117041

The Federal Government Should Encourage Early Public, Regulatory, and Industry Cooperation in Siting Energy Facilities.
Regulatory, and Industry Cooperation in Siting Energy Facilities. EMD-82-18; B-205289. November 13, 1981. ***Released*** December 14, 1981. 35 pp. plus 6 appendices (13 pp.).
Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Conservation and Renewable Financial Incentives (1610); Land Use Planning and Control: Planning for Land Use (2305); Environmental Protection Programs: Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and Considering Trade-Offs (2210).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Council on Environmental Quality; Department of the Interior; Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Clean Air Act. 40 C.F.R. 1501.2. 40 C.F.R. 1501.7.

Abstract: GAO reported on whether open-site planning for energy facilities could help balance energy and environmental concerns and what role, if any, the federal government should play in increasing the use of open-site planning processes. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Planning can be improved, and costly, time consuming licensing conflicts can be minimized if energy facility sponsors effectively consult with regulators and the public about their concerns early in project plans, while plans are still flexible. The traditional site-selection process involves industry deciding on the site, announcing the site commitment, and defending it before the regulatory agencies. This process often results in extended conflict and controversy because: project sponsors are reluctant to revise plans after applying for licenses, misunderstandings occur between industry and regulators, public hearings require additional time and money, the adversarial nature of regulatory proceedings promotes conflict and polarization, and conflicts may continue through costly and time consuming appeals. Opening the site-planning process to regulators and the public can potentially save time and money and result in more acceptable energy facility planning. GAO reviewed several open-site planning processes where industry initiatives included regulators and the public as early advisers rather than just reactive reviewers or adversaries. In other instances, regulators and the public took major initiatives in finding sites for energy facilities. GAO found that most participants were satisfied that open-site planning improved the siting process and reduced uncertainty regarding the acceptability of industry proposals. In addition, open-site planning can help in balancing domestic energy development with environmental protection and public participation values. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretaries of Energy and the Interior, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) should, where appropriate, cooperate with established open-site planning processes where later federal involvement is likely. Some industry and state processes that operate independently of and begin well before the environmental impact statement process or permitting process may want early input from federal agencies. The Secretaries of Energy and the Interior, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairman, CEQ, should, where appropriate, encourage an early, open environmental impact statement process, as conceived under the CEQ regulation implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, that facilitates more open-site planning for energy facilities. Specifically, early scoping that identifies regulatory and public concerns about alternative facility sites can help all interested parties clarify sites' acceptability and plan early to minimize siting conflicts. The Secretaries of Energy and the Interior, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairman of CEQ should, where appropriate, advise siting process participants who are unfamiliar with it about experiences with open-site planning so that they can assess its usefulness and cooperate with efforts to begin using such processes. This should be done in connection with agencies' existing National Environmental Policy Act responsibilities to consult with project sponsors during early planning.

117128

[Use of Federal Grant Funds for a Sewage Treatment Project].
CED-82-19; B-205719. December 16, 1981. ***Released*** December 28, 1981. 4 pp.
Report to Sen. John H. Glenn; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: The Nation's Water Quality Goals (2219).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Portage County, OH.

Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* John H. Glenn.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977.

Abstract: A review was performed to determine whether federal grant funds the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided to Portage County, Ohio, for a sewage treatment project were used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement. The project grant audit was discussed with representatives of the EPA regional Inspector General. The audit workpapers had been destroyed pursuant to federal record disposal regulations. The purpose of the grant to Portage County was to finance construction of a new interceptor sewer system including pump stations and force mains, and a new secondary wastewater treatment plant. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In 1975, the project was audited to determine the allowability and reasonableness of reported project costs. It was determined that the total costs were allowable and that approximately $455,000 was reimbursable under the grant agreement terms. Allegations were made in 1978 that a local government official had funneled the federal loan funds to other county activities and personal use. An investigation followed, but none of the allegations were substantiated. Two audits were performed on the Portage County accounting records during the past 3 years. The audits considered whether the county had proper fund accountability and adequate documentation for all its funds. Neither audit report indicated that the federal grant funds were not used for the purposes intended under the grant conditions. Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, GAO responsibility is limited to whether the federal funds were used for grant purposes and does not extend to the county's operations. Therefore, GAO has no basis to review the merits of the county's decision as to how the federal funds were applied. Accordingly, GAO has no reason to believe that further work on its part would alter the conclusion that the funds were used according to the grant agreement.

117205

EPA Slow in Controlling PCB's. CED-82-21; B-203051. December 30, 1981. 31 pp.

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Refer to CED-81-19, December 31, 1980, Accession Number 114081; and CED-81-21, November 19, 1980, Accession Number 113806.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Protection From Harmful Effects of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2217).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Banking, Currency and Housing; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act.

Abstract: Various studies have associated the widely used polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) with a number of health problems. Industry has purchased over 1 billion pounds of PCB's for use in electric transformers and capacitors. Since PCB's have a potential for environmental harm, Congress passed a special provision under the Toxic Substances Control Act to control PCB's. With certain exceptions, the act prohibits the manufacture of PCB's, limits their use, and requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop regulations to ensure proper marking of PCB materials and prescribe acceptable methods for disposal. Since PCB's were the only chemicals Congress specifically identified for immediate EPA action, GAO initiated this review to determine how well the PCB control mandate has been implemented. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that EPA missed by more than 7 months its congressionally mandated deadline for issuing rules on marking and disposing of PCB's. In addition, regulations for implementing the statutory ban on PCB's were late by as much as 18 months. Tight rulemaking timeframes and complicated regulatory issues are factors that contributed to the delays. EPA was not prepared to enforce regulations through a coordinated inspection program. Although progress has been made in developing such a program, additional improvements are needed to make better use of limited EPA inspection resources. EPA enforcement actions which are issued in response to violations are processed slowly and do not encourage rapid or widespread compliance with PCB regulations. Since EPA does not have the additional resources to inspect all potential PCB facilities, it must rely on the deterrent value of its penalties and voluntary industry efforts to help achieve compliance. However, penalties assessed in accordance with an agency-wide penalty policy are reduced during settlement. Such reductions may weaken the penalties' deterrent value and could be a strong indication that either the policy is not being applied properly or that the policy is incorrect. One of the EPA enforcement strategy objectives is to maximize voluntary compliance; however, its user awareness program is of limited scope. Another problem hindering the initial EPA PCB control efforts was the lack of incinerators capable of destroying the large quantities of PCB. Only two commercial incinerators are available to handle the PCB waste disposal. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should review the penalty policy and its application and, if necessary, revise it so that the limited EPA resources are used to penalize the most serious violations and that penalty reductions are limited. The Administrator of EPA should require that the industry awareness component of the strategy be expanded. The Administrator of EPA should develop a PCB enforcement strategy that encompasses such areas as: (1) inspection priorities on a regional basis; (2) complete lists of potential PCB facilities within the targeted industries; and (3) target groups, such as transformer repair shops and waste oil dealers, which are not included among the strategy's currently targeted industries. The Administrator of EPA should periodically review the regional implementation of inspection strategies to help ensure that the most appropriate facilities are being inspected. The Administrator of EPA should develop and use an information system capable of assisting in program evaluation and oversight. This information system should contain such information as types of facilities inspected, the compliance rate of a given industry, and number of inspections resulting from complaints. The Administrator of EPA should require written interim notification of possible violations to inspected facilities to speed the correction of the violation.

117241

Environmental, Economic, and Political Issues Impede Potomac River Cleanup Efforts. GGD-82-7; B-202338. January 6, 1982. 113 pp. plus 10 appendices (46 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Intergovernmental Policies and Fiscal Relations: Intergovernmental Fiscal Interaction and Problems (0407); Environmental Protection Programs: Social and Economic Effects on the Public and Private Sectors (2209).

Contact: General Government Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Agriculture and Environmental and Consumer Protection Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee; Congress.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.

Abstract: GAO reviewed the difficulties state and local governments and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have experienced over the past decade in implementing water quality programs in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. GAO selected the D.C. area for a case study concerning federally mandated water quality programs because many of the problems identified in this report are similar to those occurring in many other areas. The study cites three areas which have been created as a result of the difficulties of the past 10 years: (1) the program has been much more costly than originally expected and current federal, state, and local fiscal constraints raise significant concerns regarding the affordability of water quality standards; (2) meeting environmental standards creates a problem of sludge disposal which has not yet been satisfactorily resolved; (3) the need for the rigorous water quality standards of the existing programs and the public benefits to be derived by additional investment to meet the standards have not yet been shown. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO supports substantive changes in the planning and siting of wastewater treatment and residues management facilities. Given the enormous costs of water pollution control programs and the impact that siting of wastewater treatment plants and residues management facilities have on the program's economic and environmental effectiveness, a regional approach to water quality planning is desirable. Some local prerogatives must be sacrificed, and effective organizations for planning and implementing regional solutions must be created with responsibility and authority to make and implement decisions. Federal, state, and local environmental agencies must consider their decisions on a comprehensive basis by assessing the trade-offs among the various programs and the impacts on the air, water, and land. GAO believes that EPA and state and local governments must give greater consideration to regional approaches to these problems allowing for more comprehensive and more achievable programs benefiting the economic and environmental factors involved. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should, in considering reauthorization of and amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, retain the essential design of the act's regional planning provisions. Congress should also reemphasize that EPA requires, as necessary, regional planning and program implementation mechanisms for metropolitan areas as a prerequisite for them to obtain federal water quality project grants. Congress should consider alternative approaches if it determines that the recommended optimal regional approach is not acceptable. These include: (1) requiring EPA to become a more active participant; and (2) eliminating regional planning as a federal requirement, including federal funding for such planning, and assessing projects on a case-by-case basis using as criteria available alternatives within the applicant jurisdiction's boundaries. Congress should consider placing more emphasis on a cost/benefit approach in funding advanced wastewater treatment projects. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should ascertain how the agency can manage its programs in a more integrated manner and make recommendations to Congress on what, if any, legislative changes may be required. The Administrator of EPA should renew earlier priority efforts to establish and issue regulations for the distribution and marketing of sewage sludge products. The Administrator of EPA should undertake a more active role in assisting local jurisdictions in finding suitable methods for disposing of their sewage sludge and leading them through the regulatory maze to ensure they can be implemented. The Administrator of EPA should approve no treatment plant upgrading or expansion without first having an approved program for disposing of the resulting increased sludge volumes. The Administrator of EPA should fund no new planning efforts for wastewater treatment plants or related projects in metropolitan areas where regional approaches are needed until involved state and local governments have developed the institutional mechanisms needed to ensure thorough regional assessments of alternatives and implementation of resulting recommendations.

117290

[Methanol and the U.S. Government]. December 1, 1981. 12 pp. plus 1 attachment (1 p.).

Speech before the Chemical Week and Coal Week International Conference on Methanol; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Refer to EMD-80-88, July 22, 1980, Accession Number 112854.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency; United States Synthetic Fuels Corp.

Authority: Energy Security Act. Windfall Profit Tax Act (Crude Oil). Clean Air Act.

Abstract: GAO has assigned a high priority to reviewing federal programs and activities aimed at developing and commercializing alcohol fuels, both ethanol and methanol. GAO has concluded that alcohol fuels have vast potential for replacing petroleum fuels, particularly in the automotive sector, and the technology to produce alcohol fuels is here today. GAO work has shown that: (1) sufficient economically recoverable coal reserves exist to enable enough methanol production to replace gasoline for about 100 years and to allow for a doubling of coal demand for other uses; (2) although no commercial-size methanol plant operates in the United States today, the technology has been commercial for years; (3) methanol could be produced at a cost competitive with gasoline; (4) methanol can be used as fuel for electric generation; (5) vehicle design changes necessary for the use of straight methanol are achievable; and (6) methanol is superior to gasoline for environmental and health reasons. However, the problem of developing methanol production capacity and converting the fuel supply and automobile industries will not be easily overcome. Past federal activities to promote the development and use of methanol have been fragmented and relatively modest in scope, and methanol has received less federal assistance than ethanol. Federal methanol activities have been confined mainly to low-level research and development efforts, market and production studies, and limited testing. Federal support for energy commercialization activities in general is being reduced, and the Administration has not undertaken any new methanol initiatives. However, the Environmental Protection Agency has recently taken steps to remove restrictions on the use levels of methanol in gasoline which removes a major obstacle to the marketing of methanol as a motor vehicle fuel. The Synthetic Fuels Corporation also is currently considering financial support for a number of methanol projects. Department of Energy efforts will be confined primarily to research and development. Antitrust restraints may be removed to enable representatives of the auto and fuel supply industries to work together in resolving the problems of methanol use. If methanol is to be widely commercialized as an automotive fuel, the private sector will have to bear the primary responsibility.

117335

Information On California Delta Water Quality Standards. CED-82-30; B-205884. January 18, 1982. 10 pp.

Report to Rep. Charles Pashayan, Jr.; Rep. Tony Coelho; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Water and Water Related Programs: Financing, Cost Sharing, and Repayment Policies for Water Resources Projects and Programs (2508).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Bureau of Reclamation; California.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Charles Pashayan, Jr.; *Rep.* Tony Coelho.

Abstract: GAO was asked: (1) how much Central Valley Project (CVP) water would be used as a result of a decision to voluntarily meet California water quality standards, if the decision is permanently implemented; (2) who the potential beneficiaries from using CVP yield to ensure California Delta water quality would be; (3) who would pay for the depletion of CVP yield; and (4) how much the depletion would cost CVP users in potential lost revenues for project repayment. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** According to Bureau of Reclamation and California water officials, implementing the decision would use about 800,000 acre feet of CVP water annually. On the other hand, a new agreement currently being negotiated between federal and state water project officials, which includes meeting the new standards, could increase CVP yield by about 1.1 million acre feet. This increase results primarily from technical and other adjustments in the agreement. However, before the Bureau can sign the new agreement, Congress must authorize meeting the water quality standards as one of the purposes of CVP. The primary beneficiaries of the decision will be Delta municipal and industrial water users, agriculture, and fish and wildlife. They will benefit because improved water quality contributes to increased crop yield, more productive manufacturing processes, better drinking water, and an improved fish and wildlife environment. The water will contain fewer chlorides and dissolved solids. Yield depletion will be paid for either by current CVP users or the taxpayers, depending on whether the water quality standards are imposed for enhancement or mitigation purposes. State officials contend that the standards primarily mitigate the project operations' impact, while federal officials contend that the standards provide enhancement to the water quality and, thus, should be nonreimbursable. The Bureau estimates that the loss of revenues to be anticipated in meeting the standards would range from zero to $2 million annually, depending on how the issue of mitigation or enhancement is settled.

117448

Impediments to U.S. Involvement in Deep Ocean Mining Can Be Overcome. EMD-82-31; B-205876. February 3, 1982. 52 pp. plus 3 appendices (5 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Materials: Changing Competitive Environment for Materials Availability (1817); International Affairs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0651).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).

Organization Concerned: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Department of the Interior: Bureau of Mines; Department of State, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Office of Ocean Minerals and Energy.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: State, Justice, Commerce and Judiciary Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *House* Committee on Foreign Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Foreign Relations; *Senate* Committee on Commerce; Congress.

Authority: Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act (P.L. 96-283). Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.). National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980. S. 2801 (92nd Cong.). H.R. 13904 (92nd Cong.). H.R. 13076 (92nd Cong.). H.R. 14918 (92nd Cong.). S. 1134 (93rd Cong.). H.R. 9 (93rd Cong.). S. 2878 (93rd Cong.). H.R. 12233 (93rd Cong.). H.R. 7732 (93rd Cong.). H.R. 1270 (94th Cong.). H.R. 6017 (94th Cong.). S. 713 (94th Cong.). H.R. 11879 (94th Cong.). S. 2053 (95th Cong.). H.R. 3350 (95th Cong.). H.R. 3652 (95th Cong.). S. 2085 (95th Cong.). S. 2168 (95th Cong.). H.R. 12988 (95th Cong.). S. 493 (96th Cong.). H.R. 2759 (96th Cong.).

Abstract: The United States is heavily dependent on imports for certain metals which have been identified as critical and strategic materials. The world's deep seabeds contain enormous quantities of metal-bearing nodules which contain potentially valuable deposits of these minerals. Because of increasing concern about the future availability of minerals essential to the U.S. economy and national defense, Congress passed the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act of 1980 to facilitate orderly development of the deep ocean resources by U.S. companies pending the satisfactory conclusion of the United Nations'-sponsored Law of the Sea Treaty. GAO reviewed the implementation of the act and analyzed the major impediments to U.S. involvement in deep seabed mining, particularly as they relate to the the draft Treaty. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Full implementation of the act is inextricably tied to the status of the Treaty negotiations. The first stated objective of the act is to encourage successful conclusion of the Treaty. The act also provides for continued seabed mining operations pending conclusion of the Treaty. Therefore, the status of the Treaty and full implementation of the act are uncertain. GAO believes that the goals of the act are important and worth striving for and that the nation's interests in augmenting reliable mineral supply sources can best be served if it is a party to a comprehensive Law of the Sea Treaty, but only an amended Treaty that properly addresses U.S. interests. Opposition to the draft Treaty has focused principally on access to mine sites, long-term investment protection, interim investment protection, production controls, technology transfer, and dispute settlement. After analyzing each of these areas, GAO found that, in some cases, the industry concerns are valid and that their interests are not being adequately protected. However, in other cases, GAO believes that the concerns either are not as serious as portrayed or are premature in that they have not yet been fully negotiated. With respect to the environmental provisions of the act, GAO found that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has done considerable work on the required environmental assessments. The role of Congress has been critical to seabed mining activities in the United States, and Congress will continue to play a major role in developing policy guidelines for ocean mineral development. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should accept reasonably assured access to mine sites. It should accept the fact that guarantees for access to mine sites are unrealistic in the absence of sovereign rights to mineral resources; that the absence of such absolute rights is not in itself a fundamental shortcoming of the draft Treaty; and that reasonable access can be provided under provisions of the draft Treaty subsequent to Preparatory Commission deliberations. Congress should insist on long-term investment protection. The overall viability of seabed mining is contingent upon access to mine sites beyond first generation mining, and reasonable assurances for that access must be pursued. Congress should insist that changes to the basic nature of the parallel system in the review conference proceedings not be acceptable. Fundamental changes which could alter terms of access must be ensured against by either (1) restricting the procedures in which the assembly might change the mining system, either requiring a consensus in the assembly or providing that the assembly cannot bring about changes without council concurrence; or (2) seeking limits to review conference authority to changes that do not alter the basic operational structure under which mining is currently taking place. Congress should reassert the need to protect interim investments. Congress has agreed, through the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act of 1980, to the need to ensure that investments made prior to entry into force of a treaty should be protected. Congress should insist on alternative means of protecting developing countries' economies. The objective of protecting these economies, sought with inclusion of production controls in the draft Treaty, warrants congressional support. However, because the current production control provisions would be cumbersome to apply and perhaps counterproductive to investment, and certainly not the only means by which the objectives of protecting developing country incomes might be achieved, Congress should insist on the careful development of alternatives for achieving income protection objectives while minimizing disincentives. Congress should ensure that compensation for transferred technology is adequate to protect the developers' investments and ensure that recipients of proprietary technology safeguard it against unauthorized disclosure. Congress should concentrate now on getting the above recommendations implemented which will minimize issues potentially subject to dispute settlement procedures. GAO does not believe that acceptability and feasibility of dispute settlement mechanisms can be realistically divorced from the nature and number of issues which might have to be subject to formal dispute settlement procedures. Congress should, on the assumption that the United States proceeds with the Law of the Sea Treaty process, make sure that industry plans for mining and disposing of all four primary nodule minerals are evaluated and monitored for consistency with the conservation goals of the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act of 1980. Efforts to continue or to expand federal research and development into new markets for manganese should be considered. Congress should, on the assumption that the United States proceeds with the Law of the Sea Treaty process and to ensure the protection of the quality of the environment, make sure that appropriate support for environmental research is available for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Ocean Minerals and Energy, consonant with environmental assessment activity mandated by the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act of 1980 and necessary prior to commercial recovery operations. Congress should, on the assumption that the United States proceeds with the Law of the Sea Treaty and to ensure the protection of the quality of the environment, direct that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration carry out assessments of industry mining activities. Of particular concern should be activities which evaluate the impacts of new engineering and equipment.

117520

Producing More Fuel-Efficient Automobiles: A Costly Proposition. CED-82-14; B-203958. January 19, 1982. ***Released*** February 17, 1982. 30 pp. plus 1 appendix (3 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Transportation Systems and Policies: Determining the Effectiveness of Federal Efforts To Implement Motor Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards (2421); Energy: Further Actions the Government Can Take To Identify and Foster Energy Conservation Opportunities (1619).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Transportation: Ground Transportation (401.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Transportation; Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.
Authority: Energy Conservation Policy Act (15 U.S.C. 2002). 42 Fed. Reg. 33534.
Abstract: GAO was requested to: (1) examine the background for the current fuel economy standards; (2) review pertinent studies that assess the potential for attaining further fuel economy improvements; and (3) obtain information on the financial impact of the fuel economy standards on the automobile industry in meeting such standards. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The federal fuel economy standards were established in response to fuel shortages and concern that the nation's dependence on foreign oil posed a threat to national security and the economy. A major goal of the standards was to reduce U.S. gasoline consumption through the production and sale of more fuel-efficient automobiles. The automobile accounts for about 30 percent of all petroleum consumption and is a major factor contributing to the nation's dependence on foreign oil. After the fuel economy standards were established, the automobile industry expressed concern about having to produce cars that met the fuel standards within the specified timeframes. The industry felt that it did not have enough time to redesign its equipment and plants to produce automobiles that met the fuel standards. During the 1970's, gasoline prices rose substantially. By 1979, Americans were purchasing imported, smaller, more fuel-efficient cars. To compete with the imports and produce automobiles that met the fuel economy standards, the industry began pouring huge amounts of capital into redesigning its product line. However, this capital investment and sagging revenues resulting from high car prices and high interest rates have placed the industry in a weakened financial position for the next several years. The two major automobile producers will most likely have negative cash flows of about $3 to 5 billion in 1981. Two studies predict a moderate improvement in fuel economy gains by the early to mid-1990's, or a rapid improvement by the 1990's.

117550

A New Approach Is Needed for the Federal Industrial Wastewater Pretreatment Program. CED-82-37; B-198742. February 19, 1982. 15 pp. plus 1 appendix (3 pp.).

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Protection From Harmful Effects of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2217).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.
Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to develop and implement the industrial pretreatment program. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the: (1) overall scope and impact of the pretreatment program remains undefined; (2) program may result in costly, inequitable, and redundant treatment that may not address toxic pollution problems; and (3) program will be a further drain on scarce federal, state, and local pollution control resources. GAO believes it is highly unlikely that the program can be fully implemented within the currently established timeframe. Although EPA is conducting a regulatory impact analysis of the pretreatment program, the schedule for completing the analysis and selecting an option is very ambitious. Given the many uncertainties about toxic pollution problems, GAO is concerned about the ability of EPA to resolve these issues in the relatively short time established. EPA needs to pay close attention to the problems and unresolved issues associated with the present pretreatment program. If EPA acts too quickly in selecting a pretreatment alternative, GAO believes it may commit itself to a course of action that contains many of the current program's problems and that is equally unacceptable to those involved. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should: (1) advise Congress that the deadlines established for implementing the pretreatment program cannot be met until significant problems and issues concerning toxic pollution are resolved; and (2) provide an estimated timeframe needed to resolve these matters. The Administrator of EPA should include in a legislative package to Congress information on the: (1) pretreatment options considered; (2) estimated effect of the various options on the environment, water quality, and public health; (3) resources needed to implement various options; and (4) the estimated timeframe for full program implementation under the various options.

117583

Regulatory Effects on R&D Are Better Assessed As Part of the Innovation Process. PAD-82-1; B-203616. February 11, 1982. ***Released*** February 23, 1982. 43 pp.

Report to Sen. Lloyd Bentsen; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Issue Area: Science and Technology: Improving the Climate for Innovation To Achieve National Goals (2009); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Economic Effects of Government Regulations on Major Sectors or Industries (4061).
Contact: Program Analysis Division.
Budget Function: General Science, Space, and Technology: General Science and Basic Research (251.0).
Organization Concerned: Food and Drug Administration; Department of Health and Human Services; Environmental Protection Agency; Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Lloyd Bentsen.
Authority: Federal Hazardous Substances Labeling Act (15 U.S.C. 2051 et seq.; P.L. 92-516; 86 Stat. 816; 86 Stat. 973). Poison

Prevention Packaging Act of 1970. Flammable Fabrics Act (15 U.S.C. 1191 et seq.). Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-596; 84 Stat. 1590). Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 38). Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-504). Motor Carrier Act of 1980 (94 Stat. 793). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (84 Stat. 1676). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 (91 Stat. 685). Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal). Environmental Pesticide Control Act. 16 C.F.R. 1205. 42 U.S.C. 56.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the federal regulatory process and the effect of this process on private sector research and development (R&D) activity. R&D is part of a complex sequence of events called innovation, which is the process by which inventions and new ideas are redesigned and embodied in various outputs until something of commercial value is produced. This report focuses on the effects of federal environmental safety and health regulations on R&D. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO stated that concern about the effects of regulations on R&D is generally misdirected. Most regulated industries in the United States face controls on rates of return, prices, entry into the industry, emissions of pollutants, or product safety. While these regulations may affect R&D, they are not restrictions placed directly on the R&D process. Since the results of R&D alone have no commercial value, unless sold as such, concerns about the effects of R&D are concerns about the innovation process. Regulations adversely affecting the innovation process also tend to adversely affect certain types of R&D. GAO concluded that the direct effects of regulation on R&D embrace several distinct elements. First, costs are increased to meet regulatory requirements, which in turn, may affect the development of new products, processes, and services by forcing industries to increase the costs of new product introduction. Second, with regulation, profits tend to be reduced and with them R&D is reduced. Finally, regulations may also cause increases in uncertainty, which may have a negative effect on investment in R&D.

117664

States' Compliance Lacking in Meeting Safe Drinking Water Regulations. CED-82-43; B-206389. March 3, 1982. 18 pp. plus 2 appendices (4 pp.).

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Refer to Testimony, June 15, 1983, Accession Number 121653.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2208).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Authority: Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.).

Abstract: The National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations established drinking water quality standards and water testing requirements to ensure the quality of drinking water provided by the nation's public water systems. However, compliance with these regulations by the nation's public water systems seems minimal at best. GAO reviewed the Safe Drinking Water Program to determine how effectively the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and primacy states, those granted authority by the EPA Administrator to operate the program, have implemented the provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Findings/Conclusions: GAO found that: (1) many small community public water system supplies are not meeting the drinking water quality standards and are not being tested as required by federal regulations; and (2) as defined in the act, the effectiveness of the public notification process in informing drinking water users of violations is questionable. GAO believes that a combination of factors including the lack of full-time and properly trained operators, water system operator apathy, failure of states to perform water sampling activities, and insufficient state resources are the primary factors causing the water quality standards problems. GAO also found that the enforcement actions in the three EPA regional offices and the seven states included in its review to bring water systems into compliance ranged from none to minimal, followed no particular pattern, and were not as timely as they should have been. EPA has recently initiated several measures to deal with the mounting noncompliance problem, and GAO believes that the current action is a step in the right direction. If properly carried forward, this effort should result in actions designed to improve the water quality program. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should direct the Office of Drinking Water to develop and implement specific guidelines that the states can use when developing the enforcement strategy section of their state plans. The guidelines should include a model for ranking water systems for enforcement action, including, as a minimum, such factors as: (1) the type of violation, exceeding water quality standard or the failure to test; (2) the degree of violation, the extent to which the drinking water quality standard is exceeded or the number of months the water supplier failed to test; and (3) the size of population affected by the violation. The guidelines should also identify the various types of enforcement actions available. Finally, the guidelines should clearly define the terms "serious violators" and "less serious violators." The guidelines will help states to more effectively use their limited resources and provide for consistent application of enforcement actions.

117673

Assessment of Certain Planning Activities of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments. GGD-82-25; B-205204. January 25, 1982. ***Released*** February 24, 1982. 41 pp. plus 10 appendices (19 pp.).

Report to Rep. Thomas A. Luken; by William J. Anderson, Director, GAO General Government Division.

Issue Area: Intergovernmental Policies and Fiscal Relations: Evaluating Intergovernmental Approaches To Solve Urban Problems (0408).

Contact: General Government Division.

Budget Function: General Government: Other General Government (806.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Housing and Urban Development; Cincinnati, OH: Metropolitan Housing Authority; Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Management and Budget; National Association of Regional Councils; Cincinnati, OH: Planning Commission; Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Thomas A. Luken.

Authority: Housing Act of 1954. Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962. Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966. Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968. OMB Circular A-95. Ky. Rev. Stat. §65.210. Ind. Stat. §53-1101. EPA Emission Reduction Banking Manual.

Abstract: A congressional request was made for an evaluation of four Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) studies dealing with housing, economic development, environmental air quality, and transportation. GAO responded to a concern about the usefulness of the studies and whether the benefits and results were worth the federal funds used to finance the studies. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Most persons GAO interviewed gave favorable comments on the quality of the study and on the usefulness of the Council's work. However, the four OKI recommendations have not been accomplished. GAO pointed out that OKI, like the other councils of governments nationwide, is an advisory organization which does not have the necessary authority to implement its report recommendations. Three of the OKI member counties have questioned whether the OKI efforts are worth the cost they incur as members. Administration budget cuts make any additional program terminations likely.

117794

[The Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport Authority's Compliance With the Noise Provision of Its Federal Grant]. CED-82-49; B-205520. March 5, 1982. ***Released*** March 15, 1982. 2 pp. plus 1 enclosure (9 pp.).

Report to Rep. Anthony C. Beilenson; Rep. Bobbi Fiedler; Rep. Henry A. Waxman; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Transportation Systems and Policies: Economy, Effectiveness, and Efficiency in the Management of FAA's Activities and Functions (2475).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Transportation: Air Transportation (402.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Transportation; Federal Aviation Administration; Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport Authority.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Henry A. Waxman; *Rep.* Bobbi Fiedler; *Rep.* Anthony C. Beilenson.

Abstract: GAO was requested to review an airport authority's compliance with the noise provision of its grant agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The noise provision stated that, to the extent feasible, the authority should not increase the noise levels and/or exposure impact boundaries beyond those existing when the environmental impact statement was approved. In addition, state and local restrictions also require that the authority not permit or authorize any activity that would increase the noise impact area. GAO found no evidence that the authority had authorized any action that would increase airport noise; instead, the authority took actions to limit noise. Therefore, GAO found that the authority was in compliance with the grant agreement's noise provision. FAA and authority officials agreed that the report was accurate.

117921

A Market Approach to Air Pollution Control Could Reduce Compliance Costs Without Jeopardizing Clean Air Goals. PAD-82-15; B-205035. March 23, 1982. 104 pp. plus 9 appendices (52 pp.).

Report to Sen. Robert T. Stafford, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Refer to PAD-82-15A, March 23, 1982, Accession Number 117922.

Issue Area: Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Benefits, Costs, and Other Impacts of Regulation and the Approximate Regulatory Alternatives (4010).

Contact: Program Analysis Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* John D. Dingell; *Sen.* Robert T. Stafford.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970.

Abstract: GAO undertook a study to explore whether developing a market in air pollution entitlements is feasible. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Establishing a market in air pollution entitlements could be a less costly, more flexible way to meet minimum standards of air quality. These entitlements would allow emissions consistent with present standards governing air quality. Such a market could save the public millions of dollars relative to the present price of meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act. By using scarce economic resources more efficiently, more economic growth could be achieved without sacrificing the benefits of good air quality, and taxpayers would benefit from more efficient operations of regulatory agencies. Controlled trading gives firms considerable flexibility in choosing pollution abatement measures. A full-scale market in air pollution entitlements could develop from a workable system of controlled trading. The Environmental Protection Agency's controlled trading approach allows: (1) a variation in pollution controls among individual existing sources of pollution within a single industrial plant; (2) construction of major new industrial plants in areas which do not presently comply with the air quality mandates of the Act by obtaining emission reductions from owners of existing plants; and (3) the creation of a central facility to make emission reductions more readily available. Certain technological requirements of the Act limit controlled trading. In addition, delays and expense can arise in the permit process or firms might hoard, rather than trade, their entitlements. However, the obstacles to implementation do not appear to be insurmountable.

117922

A Market Approach to Air Pollution Control Could Reduce Compliance Costs Without Jeopardizing Clean Air Goals. PAD-82-15A; B-205035. March 23, 1982. 37 pp. plus 1 appendix (5 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; Sen. Robert T. Stafford, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Refer to PAD-82-15, March 23, 1982, Accession Number 117921.

Issue Area: Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Benefits, Costs, and Other Impacts of Regulation and the Approximate Regulatory Alternatives (4010).

Contact: Program Analysis Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* John D. Dingell; *Sen.* Robert T. Stafford.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977.

Abstract: GAO undertook a study to explore whether developing a market in air pollution entitlements is feasible. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Establishing a market in air pollution entitlements could be a less costly, more flexible way to meet minimum standards of air quality. These entitlements would allow emissions consistent with present standards governing air quality. Such a market could save the public millions of dollars relative to the present price of meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act. By using scarce economic resources more efficiently, more economic growth could be achieved without sacrificing the benefits of good air quality, and taxpayers would benefit from more efficient operations of regulatory agencies. Controlled trading gives firms considerable flexibility in choosing pollution abatement measures. A full-scale market in air pollution entitlements could develop from a workable system of controlled trading. The Environmental Protection Agency's controlled trading approach allows: (1) a variation in pollution controls among individual existing sources of pollution within a single industrial plant; (2) construction of major new industrial plants in areas which do not presently comply with the air quality mandates of the act by obtaining emission reductions from owners of existing plants; and (3) the creation of a central facility to make emission reductions more readily available. Certain technological requirements of the act limit controlled trading. In addition, delays and expense can arise in the permit process or firms might hoard, rather than trade, their entitlements. However, the obstacles to implementation do not appear to be insurmountable.

118044

EPA's Use of Management Support Services. CED-82-36; B-206136. March 9, 1982. ***Released*** April 8, 1982. 9 pp. plus 6 appendices (52 pp.).
Report to Sen. Max S. Baucus; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Personnel Management and Compensation: Improvement of the Federal Government System for Staffing (0328); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Procurement - Other Than Defense (990.4).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Max S. Baucus.

Authority: Supplemental Appropriations and Rescission Act, 1980 (94 Stat. 928). 41 C.F.R. 1-3.405-5. OMB Circular A-120. OMB Circular A-76. OMB Bull. 80-13. S. 719 (97th Cong.). EPA Order 3110.4A.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) use of consulting services. GAO reviewed the broader spectrum of management support services procured under contracts, even though many of these contracts were not classified as consulting services by EPA and did not meet the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) definition of consulting services. GAO included these contracts in its review because the EPA use of consulting-type services may be significantly understated. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO determined that 46 percent of the contracts in its 1980 sample met its definition of management support services. GAO estimated that 5 percent of the EPA fiscal year 1980 procurement requests for management services were subject to required, independent internal review designed to provide limited management control over the EPA use of consulting services. EPA contractors may be performing work which should be performed by EPA employees, but GAO could not determine if the contractor's actions were improper because of the lack of criteria to distinguish between assistance and performance. GAO found that 88 percent of the service contracts identified were cost-plus-fixed-fee, which provide minimal incentives for contractors to effectively manage costs. Regulations provide that this type of contract is suitable for use when the level of effort required for the contract is unknown. Further, GAO found that EPA service contracts were modified extensively which can add to contract costs, expand the scope of work, or extend periods of performance. Of the 30 management support services contracts which GAO reviewed in detail, work products provided under 10 of the contracts appeared to be of questionable value to EPA. In addition, contracting officers' and project officers' written evaluations of contractor performance often were not prepared in accordance with agency procedures. In reviewing the performance of individual experts and consultants, GAO found that they were generally qualified and performed the tasks for which they were hired at a reasonable rate.

118086

[Update on the Impact of Federal R&D Funding on Three Mile Island Cleanup Costs]. EMD-82-68; B-199244. April 7, 1982. ***Released*** April 14, 1982. 3 pp.
Report to Rep. Morris K. Udall, Chairman, House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; Rep. Manuel Lujan, Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.
Refer to EMD-82-28, January 15, 1982, Accession Number 117323.

Issue Area: Energy: How the Nation's Future Electrical Needs Will Be Met (1625); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Relationship Between the Regulatory Roles of the Federal Government and the States (4065).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; General Public Utilities Corp.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *Rep.* Manuel Lujan; *Rep.* Morris K. Udall.

Abstract: GAO was requested to: (1) update a prior report on the impact of federal research and development funding on the Three Mile Island (TMI) cleanup costs; and (2) answer new questions raised in response to events that have transpired since that report. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The TMI-2 cleanup cost and completion schedule has slipped steadily since the initial estimate was developed in mid-1979. This trend is continuing. The work schedule planned for 1982 cleanup activities has been revised since it was determined that the TMI-1 unit restart would be delayed for a least 6 months and the TMI-2 budget would be reduced. Some work tasks are proceeding as planned. In late 1981, the General Public Utilities Corporation budgeted $66.4 million to maintain TMI-2 in safe condition and to proceed with some cleanup activities. This has since been decreased by $6 million. The Department of Energy's (DOE) 1982 budget for TMI-2 activities is $32.75 million. About $8 million of this is budgeted for capital expenditures, primarily for the waste immobilization work at DOE laboratories; the remaining money is for operational costs. At the end of February, about 13 percent of the capital costs and about 89 percent of the operating funds had been released or committed.

118122

[Information on Federal Funding of Portions of the San Luis Unit of the California Central Valley Project]. CED-82-64; B-198221. April 13, 1982. 6 pp. plus 1 enclosure (1 p.).
Report to Rep. George Miller; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Water and Water Related Programs: Financing, Cost Sharing, and Repayment Policies for Water Resources Projects and Programs (2508).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Bureau of Reclamation; California.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* George Miller.

Authority: San Luis Act (P.L. 86-488). P.L. 84-130. P.L. 95-46.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO provided information on the funding, obligations, and expenditures for constructing the distribution systems and drains component of the San Luis Unit of the California Central Valley Project. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The proposed system will be the largest system ever built by the Bureau of Reclamation and will irrigate more than one-half million acres. Although construction of the entire unit has not been completed, irrigation water has been delivered since 1967. Construction has been completed on most of the major project features component, and the Bureau considers the authorized funding for this aspect to be adequate to complete construction of the facilities. Since 1975, the Bureau has considered the authorization ceiling for the distribution systems and drains to be inadequate because the authorization was not allowed to increase based on engineering indexes. In 1977, legislation was passed which provided some increase in the original authorization ceiling and which created a taskforce to review the management, organization, and operations of the unit. Until 1979, the distribution systems and drain component has received the maximum authorized funding. However, some of this funding was shifted in 1979 to the separate major projects features component and to other construction projects based on their higher priority needs. At the end of fiscal year 1981, expenditures and unliquidated obligations for the distribution systems and drains totalled less than the authorized ceiling. Today, insufficient funding authority remains to begin major additional work. Therefore, the program is essentially on hold until a new funding ceiling is authorized by Congress.

118136

[EPA's Progress in Implementing the Superfund Program]. April 20, 1982. 9 pp.

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Refer to CED-81-21, November 19,1980, Accession Number 113806.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee.

Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.

Abstract: Comments were presented on the results of a prior review of the Superfund Program which is designed to finance and clean up uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The fund is to be used by the federal government, primarily by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), or a state government to clean up spilled toxic wastes and hazardous waste sites where the responsible party does not take appropriate action. Implementation by EPA of the program has been hampered by a lack of final policies and guidance. Although the Superfund legislation required a national priority list of at least 400 sites by June 1981, EPA was only able to provide an interim list of 115 sites. EPA decided to develop the interim priority list because it realized that the legislatively mandated deadline would not be met. In the view of EPA, the interim list was beneficial in that it started the Superfund Program moving and provided valuable experience in implementing a site prioritization system. To determine which sites would make the interim list, EPA developed a hazard ranking system. Although EPA has two primary data bases on uncontrolled, abandoned, or inactive hazardous waste sites, it lacks a national inventory of the total number of such sites existing. Nearly 16 months after Superfund was enacted, there have been few Superfund-financed remedial action accomplishments. Lack of available funding for Superfund activities is not a cause for limited program accomplishments. In fact, Superfund obligations lag far behind the spending levels appropriated by Congress.

118165

[Impact of Budget Reductions on EPA Programs]. B-205755. April 9, 1982. 4 pp.

Letter to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by F. Henry Barclay, Jr., (for Harry R. Van Cleve, Acting General Counsel).

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Justice.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. Safe Drinking Water Act. Noise Control Act of 1972. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972.

Abstract: As part of a review on the impact of budget reductions for fiscal years 1982 and 1983, GAO was asked to review the reasonableness of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) withdrawal of 43 enforcement cases after they had been referred to the Department of Justice. In view of the discretionary authority of both EPA and Justice to determine which cases were appropriate for referral and litigation, GAO reviewed the cases solely on the basis of the reasonableness of the procedures used in their referral and subsequent withdrawal. EPA stated that its purpose for reassessing its referrals to Justice was to streamline its docket of enforcement cases and to give greater attention to environmentally significant cases. GAO found no evidence that the EPA motivation was other than as stated and concluded that there was no obvious impropriety in the withdrawal of any of the cases. However, GAO questioned the EPA failure to provide adequate, customary documentation in some files. For example, Clean Air Act cases lacked internal supporting documents related to withdrawal decisions. The lack of written documentation for these cases was the result of the informality that prevailed and not the result of any instructions or pressure placed on staff members to reach predetermined conclusions. In the future, EPA should take greater care to maintain appropriate records in support of all withdrawal actions. However, GAO was satisfied that the procedures used by EPA for the initial referrals to Justice and for the subsequent withdrawals appeared to be reasonable.

118234

[Information on the Environmental Protection Agency's Enforcement Activities]. CED-82-62; B-199765. April 1, 1982. *Released* May 3, 1982. 10 pp.

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Clean Air Act.

Abstract: In response to congressional concern, GAO provided information pertaining to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hazardous waste enforcement activities. This information reviewed: (1) the change in EPA enforcement policy under the current Administration; (2) potential enforcement organizational problems; (3) problems in issuing enforcement guidance and policies to the regions; and (4) the elimination of federal funding for certain solid waste disposal activities authorized by the Resource

Conservation and Recovery Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that current EPA enforcement philosophy emphasizes voluntary compliance to environmental statutes and regulations and that legal action against violators is initiated only if voluntary compliance fails. Several environmental officials admitted that voluntary compliance is a viable approach but cautioned that, for it to be effective, EPA must maintain a visible and credible enforcement program. The organization of EPA enforcement policies has changed twice during the present Administration, and questions have been raised as to whether the new enforcement structure might not result in accountability and coordination problems. Further, EPA has been slow in developing an enforcement guidance policy. This often results in a need for regional attorneys to contact EPA headquarters for guidance on a case-by-case basis which causes confusion and makes these attorneys reluctant to take enforcement action. GAO stated that states generally lack adequate, long-term financial support to effectively and efficiently operate state solid waste programs and, despite EPA encouragement to explore alternative funding sources, few states have done so.

118310

Environmental Protection: Agenda for the 1980's. CED-82-73. May 5, 1982. 36 pp. plus 2 appendices (3 pp.).
Staff Study by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs (2200).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Clean Air Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Clean Water Act of 1977. Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. Toxic Substances Control Act. Safe Drinking Water Act. Water Pollution Control Act.
Abstract: GAO prepared a staff study as part of its continuing reassessment of areas of national concern and interest and identified environmental protection problems and issues most in need of attention. The review will influence the scope and direction of GAO audit efforts involving pollution control programs and activities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Environmental pollution affects the daily lives of all Americans in some form or manner. Excessive pollutants introduced into the environment have an adverse impact on environmental quality, on human health, and on other factors important to human life. The United States has made major efforts to control pollution since the early 1970's and has realized some significant accomplishments. However, there have also been shortcomings: certain environmental problems continue to persist and grow worse while new ones continue to appear. Recent environmental disasters involving such things as hazardous waste dumps, pesticide contamination, dying lakes, and radiation releases have made the public increasingly aware of the major health hazards associated with the pollution of our natural resources.

118378

Improved Planning and Management of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project Is Needed. MASAD-82-35; B-206945. May 14, 1982. 2 pp. plus 1 appendix (9 pp.).
Report to John O. Marsh, Jr., Secretary, Department of the Army; by Donald E. Day, (for Walton H. Sheley, Jr., Director), GAO Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.

Issue Area: Procurement of Major Systems: Steps To Achieve the Proper Balance Between Development and Acquisition Costs, Design According to Cost Constraints, and Ownership Costs (3012).
Contact: Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Department of the Army.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on the Budget; *House* Committee on Government Operations; *Senate* Committee on Budget; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs.
Authority: Flood Control Act of 1948 (P.L. 80-858). Flood Control Act of 1968.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the effectiveness of Corps of Engineers project planning and management for the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project which the Corps currently estimates will cost about $2.2 billion. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO believes that the Corps planning and management of the project needs to be improved. The project plan is inadequate because it contains proposed work that will require major modifications or may never be done due to potential adverse environmental impacts or lack of support by the local sponsor. The Flood Control Act of 1968 expanded the project to provide for increased storage and conservation of water and for improved water distribution. Some authorized project components were placed on an inactive status or deleted from project plans or cost estimates and may never be completed. Both the Corps and the State of Florida are currently in the process of identifying and evaluating many alternatives to alleviate water supply concerns. The 1999 completion estimate is extremely optimistic, since long-term priorities and valid schedule milestones have not been established for the remaining work to ensure that it is completed in the most orderly, efficient, and effective manner. The funding levels used by the Corps to estimate the completion schedule were too high. The uncertain scope of the project has prevented the Corps from preparing and reporting meaningful cost estimates, since the estimates contain costs for work which may not be done and do not recognize costs for new work. In addition, inflation has been understated in the cost estimates. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Army should require the Chief of Engineers, based on the best information available, to identify and set long-term priorities for project segments that the Corps and local sponsors agree are essential to complete the project and should either place the remaining work segments in a deferred or inactive status or submit them for deauthorization. The Secretary of the Army should require the Chief of Engineers, based on the best information available, to provide Congress in the next annual budget submission with a restructured project plan containing a realistic completion date, a revised cost estimate, and priorities for the remaining major work segments.

118447

A More Comprehensive Approach Is Needed To Clean Up the Great Lakes. CED-82-63; B-203850. May 21, 1982. 60 pp. plus 12 appendices (77 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2208); International Affairs: Use of Non-National Areas: Oceans, Space, and Land Masses (0615).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Agriculture; Department of Commerce; Department of State; International Joint Commission--United States and Canada; Canada.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Ocean Pollution Research and Development and Monitoring Planning Act (P.L. 95-273). Clean Water Act of 1977. Municipal Wastewater Treatment Construction Grant Amendments of 1981 (P.L. 97-117). P.L. 96-108. H.R. 3600 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO made a review to determine whether the United States is meeting the objectives of the U.S.-Canadian Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, although the Great Lakes are cleaner, the United States is finding it difficult to meet the objectives of the Agreement. U.S. efforts have been hampered by a lack of effective strategies for dealing with Great Lakes water quality problems, a lack of knowledge about the extent of pollution problems and the impact of control programs, and a need for improved management of the Great Lakes pollution cleanup activities. There have been unrealistic timetables for constructing facilities, problems in obtaining and using federal grant funds, a lack of local support for construction activities, and budget reductions. Information is lacking about the nature, extent, and source of toxic pollution. State and areawide plans to address pollution from agricultural, forestry, and urban runoff have not been comprehensive and may not be completed as federal funding has been cut off. Current water quality monitoring is not providing the data needed to address the pollution problems due to a lack of funds. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the principal U.S. agency for carrying out water quality activities and implementing the Agreement, has broad and complex responsibilities requiring cooperation with a variety of federal, state, and local agencies as well as with the International Joint Commission and Canadian environmental agencies. EPA has had difficulty obtaining this cooperation which is needed to ensure that the Great Lakes water quality program can compete with other national issues. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Administrator of EPA, should determine: (1) whether the 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement objectives and commitments are overly ambitious; and (2) whether sufficient funding to meet Agreement objectives and commitments can be provided given current economic and budgetary conditions. Congress should pass legislation currently pending which would amend the National Ocean Pollution Research and Development and Monitoring Planning Act of 1978 to require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to establish a Great Lakes research office. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should direct the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) to develop a comprehensive plan and strategy to address phosphorus, nonpoint, and toxic pollution problems in the Great Lakes Basin. The Administrator should direct GLNPO to: revise its interagency agreement to include other federal agencies with responsibilities for nonpoint programs affecting the Great Lakes; serve as the coordinating mechanism for Great Lakes Basin water quality plans being developed by areawide agencies and the states and consolidate the individual state and areawide plans into an overall basin plan; and enter into an interagency agreement with NOAA to define the responsibilities of NOAA and EPA concerning Great Lakes research activities. The Administrator of EPA should direct the GLNPO to develop a surveillance and monitoring plan for the U.S. portion of the Great Lakes. Such a plan should: (1) delineate the agencies involved in Great Lakes surveillance and monitoring activities; (2) include methods and procedures to ensure that monitoring activities are carried out promptly and that the data gathered are complete and consistent in order to provide meaningful evaluations and comparative analyses; and (3) include procedures to ensure that U.S. and Canadian monitoring efforts are consistent. The Administrator of EPA should raise GLNPO to a high level in the organization and give it the authority and resources necessary to: (1) develop and implement specific action plans to carry out U.S. responsibilities under the Agreement; (2) coordinate internal EPA actions aimed at improving Great Lakes water quality; (3) coordinate with other federal agencies and the states to ensure their input in developing water quality strategies and their support in achieving Agreement objectives; and (4) serve as the liaison with and provide input to the International Joint Commission and EPA counterparts in Canada. The Administrator of EPA should direct GLNPO and the various EPA organizational elements involved in Great Lakes activities to enter into agreements specifically delineating: (1) the Great Lakes duties and responsibilities of each entity; (2) timeframes for carrying out assigned duties and responsibilities; and (3) the resources to be committed to these duties and responsibilities.

118510

Cleaning Up Nuclear Facilities: An Aggressive and Unified Federal Program Is Needed. EMD-82-40; B-207237. May 25, 1982. 43 pp. plus 8 appendices (23 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Refer to EMD-77-46, June 16, 1977, Accession Number 102777.

Issue Area: Energy: Actions To Reduce Risks of Nuclear Fuel Cycle (1623); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Department of Defense; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Armed Services; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Senate* Committee on Armed Services; Congress.

Authority: Reorg. Plan No. 3 of 1970. S. 2284 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO conducted a review to determine the status of federal efforts and activities to correct decommissioning problems identified in a prior report. In addition to following up on the implementation of the recommendations for correcting these problems, GAO also evaluated how effectively the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC), the Department of Energy's (DOE), the Department of Defense's (DOD), and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decommissioning and standard-setting programs were functioning. The review was made as part of a continuing effort to identify issues in the nuclear area, which will provide public health and safety through better federal program administration. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Nuclear facilities and sites which require or eventually will require cleanup or other disposition can be tracked, evaluated, and recorded for follow-up action if needed. In the past, nuclear facilities and sites were abandoned or decommissioned without adequate documentation of their radiological status or even a record of their existence. As a result, federal agencies are uncertain about the location or status of some facilities and sites that may be in need of decommissioning. NRC, DOE, DOD, and EPA are attempting to locate and evaluate the hazards at old, inactive sites. Despite the problems that inadequate recordkeeping systems have caused federal agencies, only DOE is revising its current recordkeeping system to provide sufficient information on the location and radiological condition of its current and future nuclear facilities and sites. Federal decommissioning programs have not sufficiently considered and incorporated decommissioning needs during the facility planning and design phase. DOE and NRC are making some progress in developing comprehensive decommissioning policies which include many of the necessary provisions. DOD has not initiated action to develop a comprehensive decommissioning policy. Standards prescribing acceptable levels of residual radioactive contamination for decommissioned nuclear facilities are not expected to be available until mid-1986. EPA is responsible for setting these standards, but has not done so because it considers their development a low priority. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress may wish to consider the general approach, suggested by DOE and discussed in this report, related to problems faced in cleaning up and providing funding mechanisms for future facilities. Congress, as part of its oversight and budgetary review responsibilities, may wish to closely evaluate the overall priorities of DOE and work with DOE in revising these priorities to provide a consistent flow of funding for cleaning up the inactive facilities. Congress may wish to consider providing DOE with the authority to carry out remedial cleanup activities for 20 sites under its Formerly Utilized Sites Program. Congress, through its legislative and oversight committees, may wish to take an active role in assuring that radiation standards, to guide decommissioning of nuclear facilities, are issued as soon as possible. Congress should designate NRC as the lead federal agency for developing and monitoring the implementation of a national policy for the decommissioning of nuclear facilities and sites, ensuring that DOE and DOD provide assistance and input to NRC in developing this policy. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Chairman of NRC should revise the NRC recordkeeping system to provide for prompt identification of licensees who have stopped operations, effective monitoring of licensee control over contaminated facilities, assurance that facilities are cleaned up when licenses are terminated, and the development and permanent retention in a central repository of records documenting decommissioning activities. The Chairman of NRC should reevaluate and, if at all possible, accelerate the NRC timetable for issuing a decommissioning policy with a view toward shortening the time required to submit a paper to the Commissioners. Shortening the timetable would enable NRC to institute earlier front-end planning and funding requirements for decommissioning NRC-licensed facilities as a condition of licensing. The funding requirements should also be made applicable to currently active licensees. The Secretary of Defense should provide DOD-wide guidance on documentation needed to identify and monitor facilities using nuclear materials and provide a permanent, centrally retained record of the radiological status of the facilities, either when operations cease, or when decommissioning is completed. The Secretary of Defense should establish a decommissioning program that specifies criteria for selecting tentative decommissioning methods during the facility planning phase and criteria for design features to be incorporated in facility planning. The Secretary of Energy should establish a decommissioning program that specifies criteria for selecting tentative decommissioning methods during the facility planning phase. The Secretary of Energy should resubmit the DOE proposed legislation to provide the necessary authority which it currently lacks to proceed with remedial cleanup of all sites under the Formerly Utilized Sites Program. The Administrator of EPA should reevaluate the priority assigned to developing residual radioactivity standards so that this process can be started immediately. The Administrator of EPA should develop and present to responsible committees of Congress, within 6 months from the date of this report, a plan setting forth the steps that are needed to develop and issue these standards and the dates that each step will be completed.

118519

[Proposed Colorado and Utah Cooperative Agreements Should Be Modified To Reduce State/Federal Duplication in Mine Plan Review] EMD-82-87; B-207451. May 27, 1982. 6 pp.

Report to James G. Watt, Secretary, Department of the Interior; by Douglas L. McCullough, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Availability of Federal Lands To Help Meet the Nation's Energy Needs (1628); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (2263).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of the Interior: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; Colorado; Utah.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Mines and Mining Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee.

Authority: Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National).

Abstract: GAO reviewed the Department of the Interior's environmental analyses of coal mine plans. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) has been making a commendable effort to streamline regulations governing mine-plan reviews as well as other aspects of coal mining. GAO believes that further potential exists with respect to the proposed Colorado and Utah cooperative agreements. These agreements create a significant potential for duplication, are inconsistent with those which Interior already has with two other states, and do not comply with the OSM proposed amendments to the regulations governing future agreements, both of which require states to provide OSM with a combined technical and environmental analysis of mine plans on federal lands. By requiring states entering cooperative agreements to prepare combined analyses, Interior can: (1) reduce state and federal duplication in mine review; (2) decrease review costs; (3) lessen delays in mine-plan approval; and (4) ensure that states assume more responsibility for regulating mining on federal lands. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Interior should require the Director of OSM to (1) modify the proposed cooperative agreements to require Colorado and Utah to prepare a combined technical and environmental analysis of each mine plan on Federal lands; or (2) reduce payment to Colorado and Utah as well as to any other States that do not prepare combined technical and environmental analyses to cover the increased OSM costs.

118520

[The Environmental Protection Agency Should Collect Overdue Industrial Cost Recovery Payments]. CED-82-92; B-204752. June 3, 1982. 6 pp.

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Baltas E. Birkle, (for Henry Eschwege, Director), GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Adequacy of Fiscal and Management Integrity of the Construction Grant Program With Existing Controls and Resources (2223).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.
Authority: Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (P.L. 92-500). Clean Water Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-217). P.L. 96-483.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the Industrial Cost Recovery (ICR) Program to determine the extent of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) control over collections of ICR payments which municipalities had collected from industrial users. The specific objectives of the review were to: (1) identify the grantees that might have collected ICR payments, (2) determine the amounts due the federal government from these grantees, (3) suggest procedures to collect the federal share, and (4) determine if EPA has the authority to collect ICR payments from grantees that had or had not received payments from industrial users. *Findings/Conclusions:* Not all grantees that collected ICR payments from industries have remitted the federal share to EPA as required by legislation. GAO discovered a lack of control over ICR payments in one EPA region that may exist in other regions. None of the eight regions reviewed had set up accounting entries for ICR payments due and amounts collected. EPA officials were unsure about the magnitude of the problem, because EPA has not conducted a nationwide survey to identify the extent of ICR payments due the federal government. In one region, officials suggested that all the ICR funds that EPA collected should be given back to the grantees for the operation and maintenance or upgrading of the treatment systems. EPA has no authority to do this. GAO believes that EPA has the authority to collect the federal share of ICR payments that grantees have already received from industrial users, but that EPA no longer has the authority to require grantees to collect ICR payments from industries which have not made payments to the grantees before the program's repeal. Grantees owing ICR payments could be identified quickly by using the Grants Information Control System. ICR coordinators and project engineers with knowledge of when the treatment facilities began functioning could contact those grantees that are likely to have collected ICR payments from industrial users. Minimal cost should be involved to collect these funds. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The Administrator of EPA should require the regional administrators to identify those grantees that have collected ICR payments from industrial users and require the grantees to remit the Federal share of these collections to EPA.

118569

Nuclear and Coal Waste Disposal Hampered by Legal, Regulatory, and Technical Uncertainties. EMD-82-63; B-204622. May 4, 1982. ***Released*** June 3, 1982. 6 pp. plus 4 appendices (17 pp.).
Report to Rep. Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Refer to EMD-81-132, September 21, 1981, Accession Number 116516.

Issue Area: Energy: Environmental Implications for Meeting Future Electrical Energy Demands (1657); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220).
Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency; Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; *Rep.* Richard L. Ottinger.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO compared the problems and uncertainties of nuclear and coal fuel cycle waste disposal. The issues involved the determination of the problems, progress, and status of disposal efforts for each nuclear and coal waste type primarily produced by electric generation. These issues included: (1) problems associated with waste collection and disposal; (2) present technical capability of waste collection and disposal; (3) present capability of the transportation system to transport the wastes; (4) comparative costs of waste disposal; (5) legal, regulatory, or institutional uncertainties affecting waste disposal; and (6) current status, progress, and problems of programs aimed at resolving these issues. *Findings/Conclusions:* Numerous legal, regulatory, and technical problems and uncertainties hamper disposal of nuclear and coal fuel cycle wastes. Available information indicates that coal waste disposal costs are higher than nuclear waste disposal costs. However, accurate costs are not readily available for the nuclear fuel cycle, because some nuclear wastes have never been disposed of. For the five basic types of wastes produced by the nuclear fuel cycle, GAO found that: (1) low-level waste disposal is hindered by inadequate disposal capacity, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has not issued disposal standards; (2) uranium mill tailings disposal is being delayed and will cost more because EPA has not issued final disposal standards; (3) spent fuel and high-level waste disposal plans are making little progress because of doubts as to whether spent fuel should be reprocessed or disposed of as waste, difficulties in finding disposal sites, and problems in transporting these wastes through certain states; and (4) transuranic waste disposal could become a future problem because more is expected to be produced. For the three forms of waste produced by coal electric generation, GAO found that: (1) gaseous wastes contribute to air quality problems and are suspected of causing other environmental concerns which in the future could place more acute restrictions on new and existing coal-fired plants; and (2) solid and liquid wastes currently present few regulatory problems or concerns but, if solid coal wastes are classified as hazardous, utilities will face increased disposal problems.

118609

[Environmental Protection Agency's Progress in Implementing the Superfund Program]. CED-82-91; B-205704. June 2, 1982. 9 pp.
Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee.
Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-580).
Abstract: GAO was requested to review the Superfund program to identify issues or problems concerning: (1) the selection of candidate sites for Superfund attention; (2) the extent and cost effectiveness of removal, remedy, and other measures at candidate sites; and (3) the ability of state governments to carry out their Superfund responsibilities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Superfund legislation provides for a $1.6 billion fund to be accumulated from taxes and federal appropriations during fiscal years 1981 to 1985. The fund is to be used by the federal government or an authorized state government to clean up spilled toxic wastes and hazardous waste sites where the responsible party failed to do so. Overall, GAO found that: (1) the program's implementation during its first 15 months was hampered by a lack of final policies and guidance; (2) a limited number of sites are available for remedial action, and problems were encountered in developing the list of sites eligible for cleanup; (3) a national hazardous waste site inventory does not exist, and thousands of identified sites have not been assessed; (4) the cleanup of sites is expected to be a lengthy and flexible process; and (5) the funding obligated for program activities lags behind approved spending. Only the 115 sites on the interim priority list are currently eligible for Superfund-financed remedial action. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) process used to develop this list was inconsistent in applying a scoring system to sites. EPA expects to more than triple the number of candidates considered for the national priority list. It is critical that assessments of sites reported to EPA be conducted, since they represent the first step in determining whether a site is a problem or a potential problem. Until the national inventory is compiled and all identified or reported sites are assessed, the extent of the uncontrolled hazardous waste site problem will remain unknown. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should direct that EPA and state personnel receive planned additional training and guidance in applying the scoring system to hazardous waste sites before such sites are scored for the national priority list. The Administrator of EPA should request the funding authorized under section 3012 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to initiate, in conjunction with the states, a national hazardous waste site inventory program. The Administrator of EPA should conduct preliminary assessments at all identified or reported hazardous waste sites lacking such assessments.

118788
International Joint Commission Water Quality Activities Need Greater U.S. Government Support and Involvement. CED-82-97; B-206437. June 23, 1982. 16 pp.
Report to Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Secretary, Department of State; by Frank C. Conahan, Director, GAO International Division.
Refer to CED-82-63, May 21, 1982, Accession Number 118447.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227); International Affairs: U.S. Participation in International Organizations (0609).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of State; Environmental Protection Agency; International Joint Commission--United States and Canada.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Foreign Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Foreign Relations.
Abstract: GAO conducted a review to determine whether the United States is meeting the objectives of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreements with Canada. The International Joint Commission (IJC) is responsible for advising the U.S. and Canadian Governments on Great Lakes and other boundary waters pollution control matters. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The U.S. Government has not adequately supported, nor has it been sufficiently involved in, the work of IJC. Consequently, IJC has had difficulty meeting its water quality responsibilities. To help IJC more effectively carry out its advisory role, the United States needs to: (1) formally respond to IJC report recommendations and requests for information on U.S. pollution control activities; (2) provide continuity of U.S.-IJC leadership when active leadership on water quality matters is of high importance; and (3) involve key federal agencies with water quality agreement responsibilities on IJC advisory boards. IJC officials maintain that the lack of formal U.S. responses to its reports and recommendations has hampered its effectiveness in advising the governments. Key U.S. Government and IJC officials believe that formal responses to IJC would result in many benefits, including improved IJC accountability to the U.S. and Canadian Governments. GAO concluded that a formal system of feedback to IJC on its reports would be efficient and useful. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of State should designate a high level official within the Department to respond to any formal IJC recommendations and requests for information and to develop and implement a system to follow up on IJC reports and recommendations. The Secretary of State should develop and formally transmit to the President of the United States a policy and procedures for establishing staggered terms for U.S. IJC Commissioners. The Secretary of State should consult with the Secretary of Agriculture and provide, in an expeditious manner, a U.S. nominee for the Water Quality Board position. The Secretary of State should, in conjunction with the U.S. IJC Commissioners, the U.S. Chairman of the Water Quality Board, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, establish a formal mechanism to acquire input for the Board from all U.S. federal and state agencies involved in water quality activities. The Secretary of State should develop and send to the President for transmittal to the U.S. IJC Commissioners a formal request for the Commissioners to: (1) develop clear and achievable objectives for the U.S. sections of IJC advisory boards; (2) require the U.S. sections of the boards to prepare activity plans and review such plans regularly to monitor the progress being made by the boards and to ensure that board resources are used effectively; and (3) develop and implement a long-term management plan or strategy for the U.S. section of IJC which, at a minimum, would provide for periodic meetings with the advisory boards and the regional office.

118790
Developing Alaska's Energy Resources: Actions Needed To Stimulate Research and Improve Wetlands Permit Processing. EMD-82-44; B-204637. June 17, 1982. 39 pp. plus 5 appendices (44 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Energy Leasing, Management, Institutional, and Development Problems of Federal Lands in Alaska (1665); Environmental Protection Programs: Reduction of the Social and Economic Impacts of Environmental Protection Programs on the

Public and Private Sectors (2215); International Affairs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0651).

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Department of the Army; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Interior Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (P.L. 96-487). Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. 1344). Water Pollution Control Act. Executive Order 8979. S. 1562 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: To determine if federal agencies are advancing environmentally sound approaches to energy exploration and development, GAO evaluated: (1) the results of oil- and gas-related experience on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, the only federal land in Alaska where significant production has occurred; (2) the measures used in Alaska to prohibit exploratory drilling during certain months of the year and to control drilling waste disposal; (3) the adequacy of research to lessen the impacts of energy development; and (4) wetlands permitting, which is of crucial importance to energy development on all Alaskan lands. *Findings/Conclusions:* Additional research is needed to evaluate the impacts of oil- and gas-related activity in Alaska as a basis for promoting environmentally sound approaches to future development without unnecessarily increasing its cost. GAO found that two costly and controversial restrictions are being widely applied to energy exploration in the Arctic; however, there has not been adequate research to support either the imposition or the removal of these restrictions. Use of site-specific research findings would allow refinement of environmental protection controls suitable to the unique characteristics of the lands on which they are applied, and this would minimize universal or blanket stipulations where they are not necessary. The Army Corps of Engineers has been slow in processing wetlands permits, which are required for many oil and gas projects in Alaska, and has frequently included controversial and costly conditions in its permits without requiring substantiation of their need through research findings and site-specific data. *Recommendation To Congress:* Congress should provide for three critical elements: coordination, prioritization, and sources of funding for research to evaluate the impacts of energy development in the Arctic. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The Secretary of the Interior should utilize existing research findings and site-specific data to the maximum extent possible and, after a source of further funding is worked out, direct and use additional site-specific research in the application of stipulations to future Alaskan energy projects. This should include using such data as a basis for determining whether the seasonal drilling restriction should be continued as a general stipulation for individual tracts. The Secretary of the Army should only grant the State of Alaska extensions to the public comment period when they are adequately justified and use research findings and site-specific data to the maximum extent possible in determining the need for proposed stipulations in future permits. The Secretary of the Army should require that federal agencies support the need for proposed permit stipulations to the maximum extent possible with site-specific data and relevant research findings. The Secretary of the Army should direct the Chief, Corps of Engineers, to have the Corps' Alaska District management periodically summarize the time required to issue public notices and enforce the 15-day timeframe established by law.

118880

[EPA's Progress in Implementing the Superfund Program]. July 9, 1982. 3 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Refer to CED-82-91, June 2, 1982, Accession Number 118609.

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.

Abstract: The Superfund legislation provides for a $1.6 billion fund to be accumulated from taxes on petroleum and certain chemicals and federal appropriations over the fiscal year 1981-85 period. The fund is to be used by the federal and state governments to clean up spilled toxic wastes and hazardous waste sites where the responsible party does not take appropriate action. Subsequently, efforts may be made to recover cleanup costs from the responsible party. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implementation of the Superfund Program has been hampered by a lack of final policies and guidance. EPA missed the congressionally mandated due date for publishing a revised national contingency plan and only recently issued final cooperative agreement guidance. Although the legislation required a national priority list of at least 400 sites by June 1981, EPA was only able to provide an interim list of 115 sites by October 1981. The process which EPA used to develop this list demonstrated a lack of nationwide consistency in applying this scoring system to sites, and both EPA and state personnel should be provided additional training and guidance in applying the system. In addition, EPA still lacks a national inventory of the total number of uncontrolled hazardous waste sites existing in the nation. The administration has not required the funding, and thousands of sites which have been identified or reported to EPA have not been assessed or examined. Until a national inventory is compiled and all identified or reported sites are assessed or examined, the full extent of the nation's uncontrolled hazardous waste site problem will remain unknown. EPA should request the funding to develop such an inventory and conduct preliminary assessments at all identified or reported, but unassessed, hazardous waste sites. Eighteen months after the Superfund was enacted, there were few Superfund-financed remedial action accomplishments. In fact, Superfund obligations lag far behind the spending levels appropriated by Congress.

118921

[Assessing the Feasibility of Converting Commercial Vehicle Fleets To Use Methanol As an Offset in Urban Areas]. PAD-82-39; B-207490. June 11, 1982. *Released* July 12, 1982. 2 pp. plus 1 enclosure (8 pp.).

Report to Rep. Ron Wyden, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Issue Area: Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Benefits, Costs, and Other Impacts of Regulation and the Approximate Regulatory Alternatives (4010); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies (2214).

Contact: Program Analysis Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee; *Rep.* Ron Wyden.

Authority: Clean Air Act.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO explored the feasibility of converting commercial gasoline-powered vehicles to methanol as a potential means of offsetting hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides in urban areas. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** To explore the merits of a methanol offset strategy, GAO addressed questions such as: (1) whether an automobile which burns methanol pollutes less than one which burns gasoline; (2) the cost of converting and operating an automobile using methanol relative to the pollution abatement achieved; and (3) the cost of conversion to methanol compared with more conventional means of reducing air pollution. GAO found that methanol-powered vehicles emit less nitrogen oxides than gasoline-powered vehicles; however, for other regulated pollutants, the evidence is inconclusive. Depending on assumptions about current gasoline and methanol pump prices, as well as varying estimates of the amount of nitrogen oxide pollution reduction achieved using methanol, the costs of a methanol offset strategy involving the conversion of on-the-road automobiles could range from $20 per pound of nitrogen oxides abated to $760 per pound. GAO concluded that a methanol offset strategy does not currently appear to be economically attractive. Its costs do not compare favorably with the current costs of using more conventional methods of nitrogen oxide abatement.

118923

Better Planning Can Reduce Size of Wastewater Treatment Facilities, Saving Millions in Construction Costs. CED-82-82; B-207869. July 8, 1982. 30 pp. plus 1 appendix (3 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: The Nation's Water Quality Goals (2219).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1956 (P.L. 84-660). Municipal Wastewater Treatment Construction Grant Amendments of 1981. 40 C.F.R. 35.900.

Abstract: GAO conducted a review to evaluate the effectiveness of the facility planning process for constructing wastewater treatment plants and to determine whether changed conditions, such as increases or decreases in population projections or industrial flow for proposed service areas, were recognized and incorporated into the facility plans before the plant was designed or before construction started. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO estimated that about $30 million in grant funds could be saved if the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 1978 facility planning regulations were applied to the 13 facility plans reviewed by GAO. These facilities were developed under pre-1978 regulations, but are not yet under construction. Current regulations limit the engineering judgment in calculating domestic and industrial flow allowances. However, under the 1978 regulations, EPA stipulated that state population projections would be the sole basis for estimating future population levels to be served by a proposed treatment system. If the 1978 regulations were applied, 11 of those 13 proposed plants would be smaller and 2 plants would be larger. The Municipal Wastewater Treatment Construction Grant Amendments of 1981 provide that no federal grant will be made to construct treatment works which provide reserve capacity in excess of the needs which existed on the date of grant approval. In addition, the amendments reduce federal participation from 75 to 55 percent of the construction costs. Many facets of facility planning are not covered by guidance or regulation. As a result, engineering judgment, which varies considerably from project to project, becomes the deciding factor in determining plant size and project cost. Additional criteria are needed to assist in the determination of proper plant size and to provide plan reviewers a basis on which to evaluate the adequacy of a plan. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should direct the Administrator of EPA to modify the agency's current policy prohibiting the retroactive application of program regulations. This can be accomplished by including in the appropriation of funds for the program for fiscal years 1982 and 1983 language that provides that any grant funds appropriated in the act should fund excess capacity only to the extent that such capacity is consistent with the criteria set forth in EPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. 35.900. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA, with the cooperation of the engineering community, should develop standards for each critical factor used in establishing existing as well as future domestic, industrial, and infiltration and inflow amounts to be treated by a wastewater plant. Deviations should require additional justification by the consulting engineer to provide EPA with a basis for evaluating the proposed change. As a minimum, these standards should establish: (1) a discharge ratio to be applied to actual water use records when determining existing and future domestic flow to the plant for treatment; (2) a method to be used in measuring industrial flow; and (3) inflow estimates based on a worst storm event experienced in a specified time period.

118934

Need To Strengthen Coordination of Ocean Pollution Research. CED-82-108; B-203956. July 14, 1982. 12 pp. plus 3 appendices (3 pp.).

Report to Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary, Department of Commerce; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Institutional Arrangements for Implementing Environmental Laws and for Considering Tradeoffs With Other National Priorities (2216).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Commerce; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Environmental Protection Agency; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on the Budget; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology: Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Oceanography Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation: National Ocean Policy Study; *Senate* Committee on Budget; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary Subcommittee.

Authority: Ocean Pollution Planning Act (P.L. 95-273). Acid Precipitation Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-294). H.R. 5401 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO conducted a review to determine whether the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) implementation of the National Ocean Pollution Planning Act had improved the coordination of federal ocean pollution research development and monitoring. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** NOAA has made considerable progress toward implementing the act. It has: (1) issued a plan and one revision containing extensive catalogs of federal ocean pollution research projects, (2) conducted a detailed review of oil pollution, which contributed to a Department of the Interior decision to intensify research on the long-term effects of off-shore drilling, (3) influenced the distribution of some NOAA research grants, and (4) improved communication among researchers and managers by sponsoring various meetings and forums to exchange information. However, NOAA attempts to implement the act have been hampered because NOAA has had little authority to influence research conducted by other federal agencies, and the NOAA plan has not indicated how recommended research should be funded and has not recommended specific roles to agencies which research similar subjects. NOAA must rely on the voluntary cooperation of research agencies to help prepare and implement its 5-year plan, and it has no explicit authority under the act to review research budgets. These limitations reduce the likelihood that any changes recommended by the plan which are not viewed by the affected research agencies as fully consistent with their interests or missions will be adopted. Agencies concentrating on their own interests to the exclusion of broader federal concerns could lead to misplaced research emphasis and unnecessarily duplicative research. The plan should provide more direction on the spending of funds and the allocation of responsibilities among agencies which are researching similar issues. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Commerce should seek legislation amending the National Ocean Pollution Planning Act of 1978 to more fully realize the congressional purpose of effective coordination of ocean pollution research. The proposed legislation should be drafted after mechanisms or institutional arrangements used in other multiagency coordination programs have been reviewed for their applicability to the coordination of ocean pollution research. At a minimum, the National Ocean Pollution Planning Act should be amended to give NOAA, or an appropriate interagency coordinating committee, explicit authority to review federal agency research budgets before they are approved by the Office of Management and Budget. The Secretary of Commerce should direct the NOAA Administrator to prepare future ocean pollution research plan revisions so that they address, in more detail than has been the case in the past: (1) how federal research money should be allocated so that the most important research gets done and limited research money is not diverted to less important programs; and (2) how responsibilities should be allocated to agencies exploring similar ocean pollution issues to avoid duplication or inefficiently organized research.

119008

Cleaning Up the Environment: Progress Achieved but Major Unresolved Issues Remain. CED-82-72; B-207657. July 21, 1982. 2 vols. (vol. 1, 51 pp.; vol. 2, 57 pp.) plus 4 appendices (7 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Reduction of the Social and Economic Impacts of Environmental Protection Programs on the Public and Private Sectors (2215).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. Clean Water Act of 1977. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Water Pollution Control Act. Safe Drinking Water Act. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Noise Control Act of 1972. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal). Solid Waste Disposal Act. Quiet Communities Act of 1978. Aircraft Noise Abatement Act. Aviation Safety and Noise Abatement Act of 1979.
Abstract: With respect to efforts to clean up the nation's air, water, and land, GAO conducted a review to determine: (1) the progress made toward meeting key environmental goals; (2) how specific cities have coped with these mandates; and (3) what unresolved issues face the nation in the future. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Overall, there has been progress toward meeting established environmental goals. The air is significantly cleaner, more wastewater now receives the required level of treatment, and most drinking water meets national standards. However, the job is not complete. Deadlines for meeting key goals have been extended significantly and unresolved issues, such as how to control acid precipitation and nonpoint sources of water pollution and how to cope with reduced federal funding, will make meeting goals more difficult. In addition, the costs and benefits of environmental protection programs are not easily determined. The Environmental Protection Agency has made little progress on its plans for the improvement of solid waste disposal regulation. Acid precipitation and the long-range transport of air pollutants pose serious air quality control problems which have yet to be resolved. In the area of water pollution, little progress has been made toward controlling nonpoint pollution, and ground water contamination is a growing problem. Regardless of whether compliance with environmental requirements occurs slowly or quickly, it is important that initial compliance be sustained over the long term. In addition, there is a need for flexibility in making pollution control decisions. Some of the present pollution control laws increase the volume of residues that must be disposed of and restrict available disposal options. Because of these restrictions, government and industry may not be free to choose the most environmentally safe disposal options dictated by site-specific conditions.

119206

Improved Planning Needed by Corps of Engineers To Resolve Environmental, Technical and Financial Issues on the Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection Project. MASAD-82-39; B-207860. August 17, 1982. 2 pp. plus 2 appendices (11 pp.).
Report to John O. Marsh, Jr., Secretary, Department of the Army; by Walton H. Sheley, Jr., Director, GAO Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.

Issue Area: Procurement of Major Systems: Congressional Information on the Issues Concerning Systems for Which Funds Are Requested (3001).
Contact: Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Army; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on the Budget; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Government Operations; *Senate* Committee on Budget; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the status of the Army Corps of Engineers' Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection Project which is intended to provide hurricane protection to the Greater New Orleans metropolitan area. Because of environmental and other issues, the Project, which was to be completed in 1978, is only half finished. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the Corps is considering changing its original plan of barrier structures and some low levees to one requiring much higher levees with no barriers, an alternative which is less costly and less detrimental to the environment. However, besides engineering and environmental concerns, there are also other unresolved problems on the

project. Because no project plan has been formally adopted, cost estimates are inaccurate and, due to limited funds, current financing has not been ensured by the local sponsors. In addition, costly work at the drainage canals has not been reported to Congress. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of the Army, to resolve environmental and technical issues, should require the Chief of Engineers to develop an acquisition strategy plan, and after approval, work closely with local sponsors to acquire the necessary rights-of-way, easements, and construction priorities for the remaining portions of the Project. The Secretary of the Army, to resolve environmental and technical issues, should require the Chief of Engineers to develop a technical approach to construction at the drainage canals which can be implemented and which has concurrence from local sponsors. The Secretary of the Army, to resolve environmental and technical issues, should require the Chief of Engineers to develop specific milestones for completion of the remaining portions of the Project. The Secretary of the Army, to ensure adequate financing by local sponsors of their share of project funding, should require the Chief of Engineers to estimate the cost to local sponsors if the high-level plan is adopted or if the barrier plan is retained and to obtain local sponsors' concurrences on financial shares to be borne by them.

119342

[GAO's Work on the Acid Rain Issue]. August 19, 1982. 12 pp.
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; by Donald Z. Forcier, Senior Group Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Sen.* Wendell H. Ford.
Abstract: In testimony before a Senate committee, GAO discussed the preliminary findings of its current study on acid rain which is to be completed this fall. The study consists mainly of an analysis and synthesis of scientific and economic information and an examination of the cost implications of alternative acid deposition control strategies. Three central issues were addressed: (1) present and anticipated damages due to acid deposition; (2) causes of acid deposition; and (3) costs and other effects of proposed solutions. GAO found that, in almost all damage categories, the lack of economic as well as scientific data has made it difficult to establish reliable answers to questions concerning the potential severity of acid rain and the timeframe necessary to take corrective action. A major cause of acid deposition is the burning of fossil fuels, and global patterns show that eastern North America contains a high amount of acid rain. This is a relatively new pattern, not seen before the industrial revolution. Studies show that each country provides the largest single share of its own deposition, and emissions from any source will spread in the direction of prevailing winds; however, further research in these areas is necessary to achieve accurate quantitative results. In studying possible control actions in terms of proposed legislation, GAO found that: (1) setting state-by-state emission reduction targets and employing a diverse number of methods would be more cost-effective than prescribing a single nationwide control method; (2) higher levels of reduction rapidly increase costs; (3) a program to reduce sulphur dioxide emission by about 10 million tons per year in the eastern United States would cost approximately 3 to 4.5 billion 1980 dollars annually; (4) the program's impact on coal production and employment would depend heavily on the combination of control methods used; and (5) electricity rate increases in states most affected by a 10-million-ton reduction program would likely average 10 to 15 percent.

119423

Asbestos in Schools: A Dilemma. CED-82-114; B-206367. August 31, 1982. ***Released*** September 10, 1982. 28 pp. plus 2 appendices (11 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; Rep. George Miller, Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor: Labor Standards Subcommittee; by Henry Eschwege, Director, GAO Community and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Protection From Harmful Effects of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2217); Health Programs: Effectiveness of Federal Efforts To Improve Health Through Control of Environmental Health Hazards (1266).
Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Education.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Education and Labor: Labor Standards Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio; *Rep.* George Miller.
Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act. Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act of 1980. Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-35). Clean Air Act.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the progress of federal efforts to reduce asbestos hazards in schools, including: (1) the impact of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) technical assistance program to stimulate states and school districts to correct asbestos problems; (2) other actions which EPA has taken or could have taken to protect schoolchildren from asbestos; and (3) state and federal agency compliance with the Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The EPA technical assistance program has had some impact in stimulating voluntary inspections and abatement activities. However, it was not successful in getting all schools to inspect for asbestos. GAO found that approximately 21 percent of public schools in 11 states had not been inspected. Moreover, based on EPA standards, the quality of inspections that were done is questionable. Many inspections were restricted to certain areas; in other cases, school officials relied on construction records to identify asbestos-oriented problems rather than on visual inspections and test sample analyses. EPA has not determined when asbestos is hazardous enough to warrant abatement; however, such criteria are being developed. Although EPA provides some guidance on various factors to consider when making abatement decisions, it found that these factors were unreliable when tested. Because of a lack of hazard criteria, state and local policies on asbestos abatement range from total removal to total inaction. The Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act has had little impact. The grant and loan program for detecting and abating asbestos in schools was not funded because of other budget priorities. The Department of Education has provided procedures for detecting and correcting asbestos. However, it has not completed its revision of EPA guidelines. Additionally, state reports and records required by the act provide little additional information on the extent of asbestos in schools.

119462

[Opportunities for Improved Oil Recycling Still Exist]. PLRD-82-113; B-208825. September 17, 1982. 9 pp. plus 1 enclosure (1 p.).
Report to Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary, Department of Defense; by Donald J. Horan, Director, GAO Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.

Issue Area: Logistics Management: Proper Management of Unneeded Property (3816); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of the Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (2263); Materials: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (1851).

Contact: Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.

Budget Function: General Government: General Property and Records Management (804.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Office of Management and Budget; Department of the Army; Department of the Navy; Department of the Air Force.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Defense Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Armed Services; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Defense Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Armed Services.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (P.L. 92-500). Energy Policy and Conservation Act (P.L. 94-163). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-580). Used Oil Recycling Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-463).

Abstract: In response to a previous GAO recommendation, the Department of Defense (DOD) established an oil recycling and reuse policy and guidance for the military departments and defense agencies on the collection and disposition of used oils. GAO performed a follow-up review of how DOD activities collect and dispose of used oil. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Many DOD installations and activities are not following the DOD guidance. GAO found that collection and selling practices tended to mitigate against re-refining used oil, and some activities were selling used oil when they could have burned it more economically as fuel. While the services have adopted and incorporated the DOD policy into their own regulations, their failure to aggressively implement this policy and guidance has resulted in the loss of numerous opportunities to achieve better conservation and economic use of lubricating products. By improving their collection and disposal practices, DOD activities can make their used oil more suitable for re-refining and also enhance the product's market value. This can be done by: (1) collecting used oil in ways that segregate recoverable products, such as automotive and jet turbine oils, by type and keeping them clean; (2) storing oils in bulk containers to reduce storage and handling costs; and (3) collectively disposing of used oils from installations in the same geographic area to enable DOD to offer large quantities of used oil which would make re-refining more feasible and reduce disposal costs. GAO believes that DOD activities should cease the practice of selling used oil when it can be burned more economically as fuel. It also believes that the closed-loop re-refining arrangement has excellent potential for economically improving the use of used oil at large installations. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Defense should direct the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force to follow the DOD guidance in the collection and disposal of used oil. The Secretary should also direct a trial of the closed-loop arrangement for re-refining used oil generated at a large user installation or several installations in close proximity to one another. If this trial shows this arrangement to be a beneficial way of utilizing used oil, it should be extended to as many locations as is feasible.

119491

Problems in Air Quality Monitoring System Affect Data Reliability. CED-82-101; B-206212. September 22, 1982. 24 pp. plus 3 appendices (20 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of the Clean Air Act and the Effect of Changes to the Act (2224).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 (P.L. 95-95; 42 U.S.C. 7619 et seq.). Executive Order 12291.

Abstract: The Clean Air Act requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a nationwide air quality monitoring network, and each year EPA makes decisions, based on the data received from this network, which have significant impacts on the health and economic well-being of the nation's citizens. Accurate and reliable air quality data are essential in formulating many of these decisions, evaluating their impact, and determining future strategies. EPA has experienced serious difficulties in obtaining these data. GAO undertook this review to identify these problems and offer recommendations for corrective action. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that EPA progress in implementing the mandate of the act has been slow and costly and has not resulted in a reliable air monitoring network. Accurate air quality data are also essential for EPA enforcement of the Act and as a basis for establishing and revising the ambient air quality standards, which set the maximum allowable air pollutant levels. The first phase of this air monitoring effort was the establishment of the National Air Monitoring Stations network to provide air quality data to EPA. As of June 1982, 70 percent of the monitors required for the network were acceptable. However, even with full implementation of the network, EPA will not have fulfilled its air quality monitoring responsibilities; a state and local air monitoring stations network also is required to provide annual air quality data for the states' use in developing pollution control strategies. The air monitoring networks have not been completely implemented primarily because of a lack of approved quality assurance controls. To ensure data reliability, EPA has established requirements for collecting, processing, and reporting air quality data. However, EPA and the states did not follow these requirements and did not establish procedures needed to correct data handling problems. EPA is trying to determine the causes of data handling problems; however, its efforts are limited by a lack of procedures designed to identify those monitors which are not reporting air quality. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should, in consultation with the EPA Administrator, establish a deadline by which the networks must be operational, after considering factors such as the technological state of the art and the availability of resources. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The EPA Administrator, in consultation with the states, should include as a condition in the EPA grant agreement with the states that all funds designated to meet EPA air monitoring standards be spent to achieve these standards. The EPA Administrator should designate the Director, Monitoring and Data Analysis Division, as the air quality data base manager.

119572

[The Methanol Transportation Fuel Market]. September 24, 1982. 4 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; by F. Kevin Boland, Acting Deputy Director, GAO Energy and Minerals Division.

Contact: Energy and Minerals Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Air Act.

Abstract: In testimony before a House subcommittee, GAO discussed three aspects of the widespread public use of methanol: (1) regulations and standards which may affect commercialization of methanol; (2) its potential for vehicle fleet use as a market catalyst; and (3) possible sources of methanol if a major transportation market develops. In order for methanol to come into widespread automobile use, standards dealing with quality, grade, and handling will have to be developed in cooperation with private industry. Assuming economic or other motivation for the use of methanol, the most likely potential users would initially be fleets with restricted uses, such as fleets belonging to utilities; however, this market could be limited considerably by the range of methanol vehicles and by their reduced resale value as long as the fuel is not widely available to the used-car buying public. In the United States, methanol is currently produced primarily from natural gas, but many foresee the use of domestic coal as a reason for increased production. This is one of the principal arguments in favor of the development of methanol as a means of reducing U.S. dependence on imported energy. However, GAO believes that, with lower foreign methanol prices and without a commensurate development of a domestic methanol fuel industry, the development of a methanol fuel market could result in further dependence on foreign methanol.

119713

[The National Water Pollution Control Program]. October 6, 1982. 11 pp.
Speech before the Water Pollution Control Federation; by Henry Eschwege, Assistant Comptroller General, GAO Office of the Comptroller General.

Contact: Office of the Comptroller General.
Organization Concerned: Water Pollution Control Federation.
Authority: Municipal Wastewater Treatment Construction Grant Amendments of 1981. Clean Water Act of 1977. P.L. 92-500.
Abstract: In a speech before a water pollution control association, GAO reviewed the substantial changes which the National Water Pollution Control Program has undergone and the further challenges it faces as newly enacted legislation and additional budget cuts take hold. Water pollution abatement has advanced considerably and important successes have resulted, but the program has yet to achieve its goals. If success were measured in terms of funding, the program would probably be considered very successful. Over $38 billion has been appropriated for the program since 1972. Progress has been made under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program, and billions of pounds of pollutants which previously were discharged directly into the nation's waterways are now being removed. States have increased their water pollution control efforts to the point where in fiscal year 1982 they provided about 54 percent of water quality program management budgets. However, the control of nonpoint sources of pollution continues to be a problem, thousands of permits will soon expire and will need to be reissued, and there is a need to continue to develop, upgrade, and operate the vast infrastructure of collector and interceptor sewers and treatment plants. Strong program management must be maintained at various governmental levels in the face of stiff competition for limited resources. GAO cautioned that the Alternative and Innovative Technology Program may not provide the relief envisioned from high waste treatment costs; there continue to be ongoing problems of operating and maintaining waste treatment facilities, and few municipalities are setting aside funds to replace treatment plants at the end of their economic/technological lives.

119807

Environmental and Socioeconomic Status of the Hampshire Energy Project. RCED-83-38; B-209451. October 22, 1982. ***Released*** October 27, 1982. 3 pp. plus 2 appendices (23 pp.).
Report to Rep. A. Toby Moffett, Chairman, House Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: More Cost-Efficient, Effective Management of the Synthetic Fuels Corporation (1675); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: United States Synthetic Fuels Corp.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; *Rep.* A. Toby Moffett.
Authority: Energy Security Act.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reported on the U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation's (SFC) action on its proposed Hampshire Energy project in Wyoming. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, because necessary preconstruction permits can be obtained on a schedule that would permit construction to begin in 1983, SFC has conditionally advanced the project into financial assistance negotiations. GAO also found that SFC staff are relying heavily upon the Wyoming permitting process to assess the project's environmental control technology and socioeconomic impact strategies while making their own assessment independently. There are pressures on SFC and the state permitting agencies to act on the proposal; however, environmental groups are pressuring the state to delay the permit process until information is complete. SFC has required an environmental monitoring plan outline from Hampshire, which was submitted in revised draft form but has not been approved. A monitoring plan will be requested after the financial assistance agreement has been awarded.

119862

Improved Quality, Adequate Resources, and Consistent Oversight Needed if Regulatory Analysis Is To Help Control Costs of Regulations. PAD-83-6; B-207230. November 2, 1982. 9 pp. plus 7 appendices (152 pp.).
Report to Sen. William V. Roth, Jr., Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Benefits, Costs, and Other Impacts of Regulation and the Approximate Regulatory Alternatives (4010).

Contact: Program Analysis Division.

Budget Function: General Government: Executive Direction and Management (802.0).

Organization Concerned: Office of Management and Budget; Securities and Exchange Commission; Environmental Protection Agency; Interstate Commerce Commission; Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Department of Transportation; Consumer Product Safety Commission; Department of Health and Human Services.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Treasury-Postal Service and General Government Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Government Operations; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs; *Sen.* William V. Roth, Jr.
Authority: Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980. Executive Order 11821. Executive Order 12044. Executive Order 12291. S. 1080 (97th Cong.). S. Rule 26.11(b).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO examined the role and performance of regulatory analysis in controlling the costs of federal regulation and the fundamental outstanding issues confronting Congress in determining whether and how to legislate a regulatory analysis requirement. Specifically, GAO was asked to analyze the effects of regulatory oversight by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12291 and the potential effects of proposed Senate Bill S. 1080. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Executive Order 12291 currently requires that major regulations be analyzed to assess their costs and benefits. This requirement may be augmented by proposed regulatory reform legislation, S. 1080, which would require a description and comparison of the costs and benefits of all major proposed and existing regulations and reasonable alternatives to them. GAO found that many regulatory analyses do not provide adequate support for their conclusions. The costs of regulatory analysis under Executive Order 12291 are high, and S. 1080 can be expected to increase them. The regulatory impact analysis requirement of Executive Order 12291 has not significantly slowed deregulation. S. 1080 would require more analysis of deregulatory initiatives and provides no discretionary authority to waive the regulatory analysis requirement for the initiatives or to provide selective relief not supported by analysis. S. 1080 incorporates some provisions that would provide the public with more information on the role of OMB and would also increase the potential for displacing agency rulemaking discretion by formally authorizing presidential oversight. GAO believes that ambiguity in existing legislation about the applicability of cost-benefit standards may conflict with congressional intent and that the oversight provided for in S. 1080 is likely to reduce the independence of regulatory agencies. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should consider requiring OMB and the agencies to provide information on what resources the agencies have for preparing regulatory analyses and on whether there is a disparity between the resources available and required for meeting the substantive requirements of statutes. Congress should consider reviewing the provisions of existing regulatory legislation to help remove statutory barriers to cost-effective regulation and reduce the likelihood of a regulatory analysis requirement conflicting with congressional intent. Congress should direct congressional committees with responsibility for substantive regulatory legislation to consider amending existing legislation to take into account the fact that, absent any statutory directions to the contrary, a cost-benefit standard may now be applied. Congress should consider removing language that prevents agencies from considering costs or clarifying goals in terms of performance so that agencies are permitted to seek out the most cost-effective means of achieving those goals. Congress should consider providing agencies with additional guidance on how intangible costs and benefits should be evaluated for purposes of including them in a regulatory analysis. Congress should consider reviewing the implementation of Senate Rule 26.11(b) that requires these economic impacts of regulatory legislation to be assessed. Congress should consider clarifying presidential oversight authority in S. 1080, especially as it relates to rulemaking by independent regulatory agencies. Congress should consider the relevant provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 as an approach to defining a procedure by which independent regulatory agencies can overrule rulemaking directions of the President. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB plays a broader role in overseeing the regulatory analysis process. The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB monitors the procedures used by the agencies in integrating regulatory analysis into the regulatory decisionmaking process and should monitor the resources available to the agencies to fulfill their analytical responsibilities. The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB broadens its effort in promoting the adoption of innovative techniques as an approach to reducing costs, rather than simply establishing less restrictive standards. The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB promotes the development of consistent methodologies for measuring regulatory impacts. The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB develops written guidelines for waiving the analysis requirement to replace the implicit guidelines that are now in effect. OMB should apply the regulatory analysis requirement more consistently, and a full public explanation should be provided when waivers are granted. The Director of OMB should ensure that OMB oversight be conducted in the open, with public filings of OMB comments on agency analyses. The Director of OMB should require that all those who contribute factual information from outside OMB provide sufficient documentation to enable it to assess the validity of the information. OMB should use ex parte facts or analyses as a basis for commenting on an agency's proposed rule or regulatory impact analysis only when the source of those ex parte materials is identified publicly and accompanied by sufficient documentation to assess their validity. Procedures should be established to ensure that those materials, including the documentation, are forwarded to the agency for inclusion in the rulemaking record.

120023

[Savings Possible Through Use of Variable Effluent Limits for Advanced Waste Treatment Projects]. RCED-83-57; B-209867. December 1, 1982. 6 pp. plus 2 enclosures (2 pp.).

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effective Implementation of Water Pollution Control Activities and Programs (2222).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).

Abstract: The Water Pollution Control Act requires advanced waste treatment projects to have a pollution discharge permit to establish the variable effluent limits (VEL's) or restrictions on the amount, rate, or concentration of pollutants that may be discharged into the water. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO believes that potential exists for savings through the use of VEL's in the operation and construction of advanced waste treatment facilities. While reliable nationwide savings estimates are not available, a number of federal and state officials estimate that millions of dollars in operating costs can be saved each year. The use of VEL's offers state and local governments an opportunity to reduce the cost of constructing and operating municipal and industrial advanced treatment facilities while maintaining water quality. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) direction on the use of VEL's together with technical assistance to develop VEL's should help stimulate greater use at the state and local government levels. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator of EPA should direct the Assistant Administrator for Water to issue a directive pointing out the possible cost savings of using VEL's and encouraging delegated states to use them to the extent possible when issuing initial or reissuing expired National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits. The Administrator should also direct EPA Regional Administrators to use VEL's to the extent possible in the 21 states where EPA administers the permit program and to work with and provide any needed technical assistance on using VEL's to the 35 delegated states.

120094

[Used Oil Collection and Disposal Practices Followed by Federal Agencies]. PLRD-83-12; B-209740. December 8, 1982. 3 pp. plus 2 enclosures (20 pp.).

Report to Rep. Berkley W. Bedell, Chairman, House Committee on Small Business: Energy, Environment and Safety Issues Affecting Small Business Subcommittee; by Donald J. Horan, Director, GAO Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.

Issue Area: Logistics Management: Proper Management of Unneeded Property (3816); Water and Water Related Programs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2551); Materials: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (1851).

Contact: Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.

Budget Function: General Government: General Property and Records Management (804.0); Energy: Energy Conservation (272.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Environmental Protection Agency; General Services Administration; Department of Justice; Department of Transportation; United States Postal Service.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Small Business: Energy, Environment and Safety Issues Affecting Small Business Subcommittee; *Rep.* Berkley W. Bedell.

Authority: Used Oil Recycling Act of 1980.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed matters concerning the collection of used oil and disposal practices of selected federal agencies. GAO was specifically asked to: (1) review actions taken by the Department of Defense (DOD) in response to a 1977 GAO report regarding improved oil recycling; (2) compare waste oil recovery and disposal practices of several agencies, including those in the New York City area; (3) determine the role of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in developing governmental policy on used oil recovery; and (4) assess whether EPA or any other federal agency has developed an effective governmentwide policy for environmentally safe and conservation-oriented handling of used motor oil. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO found that many installations and activities were not following DOD policies and procedures regarding oil recycling and reuse. Practices tended to mitigate against oil refining and in some instances used oil was sold rather than recycled as a fuel. GAO noted that earlier recommendations had directed the Secretary of Defense to direct the Army, Navy, and Air Force to follow DOD guidance. GAO reviewed oil collection, storage, and disposal practices at vehicle and maintenance shops operated by civil agencies in the New York City area and found that, although the agencies recognized the importance of environmental protection and resource conservation, they provided little guidance on handling used oil. GAO learned that agencies were selling or giving used oil to collectors, who appeared to sell it to others, which is in violation of federal property disposal regulations. This practice is being brought to the attention of the relevant agencies. GAO learned that EPA has gathered information to quantify the extent of hazardous material in used oil and that preliminary results indicate that hazardous adulteration of used oil is common. Finally, GAO found that there is no formal governmentwide policy specifying how federal agencies must handle their used oil to ensure environmental protection and resource conservation.

120122

Problems and Delays Overshadow NRC's Initial Success in Improving Reactor Operators' Capabilities. RCED-83-4; B-209014. December 15, 1982. 25 pp. plus 1 appendix (13 pp.).

Report to Nunzio J. Palladino, Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Improving the Safety of Conventional Nuclear Reactor Technology (1622); Environmental Protection Programs: Seriousness of Radiation (2262).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Emergency Energy Preparedness (274.0).

Organization Concerned: Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Institute of Nuclear Power Operations.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Abstract: GAO discussed Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) actions to improve reactor capabilities which were found deficient by numerous investigations following the accident at the Three Mile Island (TMI) Nuclear Powerplant. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO found that, within 2 years of the TMI accident, NRC required and utilities implemented several actions to improve and strengthen the training and qualifications of reactor operators and other key control room personnel. These were interim solutions to the problems identified by the TMI investigation, and GAO believes that in the short term these actions resulted in improved safety at nuclear powerplants. After initial actions were taken, NRC efforts in this area began to lose momentum and implementation problems and delays started to occur. The impact of the NRC implementation problems may have been lessened by the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO), which assumed a leadership role in assuring that the capabilities of control room personnel were improved in accordance with the NRC Action Plan. INPO is currently performing the first step of the long-term NRC program, a generic position task analysis for key personnel, and eventually plans to complete many programs similar to long-term NRC actions which are currently behind schedule. NRC is monitoring INPO work and is revising its schedule for completion of tasks to correspond with INPO timeframes. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The Chairman, NRC, should develop a specific agreement for coordinating NRC and INPO activities related to operator training and qualification which will permit NRC to keep abreast of the direction, quality, and progress of the work of INPO while recognizing the sensitive relationship between NRC and INPO. The Chairman, NRC, should review all revised training programs developed by the utilities, correct any deficiencies before approving the programs for implementation, and audit the implementation of these programs within 1 year from the date of implementation to ensure that they are providing effective training to key control room personnel.

120216

EPA Implementation of Selected Aspects of the Toxic Substances Control Act. RCED-83-62; B-209343. December 7, 1982. *Released* December 22, 1982. 5 pp. plus 6 appendices (20 pp.).

Report to Sen. Robert T. Stafford, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; Sen. Slade Gorton, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; Sen. Max S. Baucus, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; Sen. Jennings Randolph, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Improvement of the Regulation of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2225).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Sen.* Robert T. Stafford; *Sen.* Jennings Randolph; *Sen.* Max S. Baucus; *Sen.* Slade Gorton.
Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO assessed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to negotiate voluntary agreements with the chemical industry to perform tests on the health and environmental effects of chemical substances, in lieu of issuing administrative rules to require such testing pursuant to the Toxic Substances Control Act. GAO also identified whether opportunities were provided under this approach for public participation. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO believes that EPA may negotiate voluntary testing agreements and, in appropriate instances, accept them in lieu of the act's test rules. EPA officials feel that voluntary negotiated testing agreements outside of the formal rulemaking process reduce the time it takes to obtain data on health and environmental effects. They stated that developing a negotiated agreement would require fewer EPA resources than acquiring the same data through a formal rule; in addition, a negotiated agreement lends itself to a cooperative, rather than an adversarial, relationship among all parties. EPA takes the position that issuance of a test rule to require health and environmental effects testing by manufacturers is not necessary under the act when voluntary testing by the manufacturers either has been agreed to or is ongoing. GAO believes that the EPA interpretation of its authority to negotiate agreements with industry for the voluntary testing of priority chemical substances is reasonable. A major shortcoming of the negotiated testing agreement is that it is not enforceable. However, EPA can issue a test rule if an agreement is not lived up to. The negotiated testing process, as described by EPA, provides the opportunity for the public to review and comment on proposed EPA actions at four different points of the process.

120248
Attrition of Scientists at Three Regulatory Agencies. PAD-83-16; B-209389. December 27, 1982. 4 pp. plus 3 appendices (12 pp.).
Report to Rep. Albert Gore, Jr., Chairman, House Committee on Science and Technology: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Morton A. Myers, Director, GAO Program Analysis Division.

Issue Area: Science and Technology: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2051); Personnel Management and Compensation: Adequacy of Consideration of Pertinent Factors in Workforce Reductions and Staffing Plans (0336).
Contact: Program Analysis Division.
Budget Function: General Government: Executive Direction and Management (802.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Health and Human Services; Environmental Protection Agency; Consumer Product Safety Commission; Food and Drug Administration.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Science and Technology: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; *Rep.* Albert Gore, Jr.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO described: (1) the net changes that occurred in the employment of scientific personnel in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) during calendar year 1981, and compared these changes with those that occurred in the previous 2 years; (2) the extent to which reductions-in-force (RIF's) and hiring freezes played a role during the periods; and (3) how personnel changes have affected the occupational and functional composition of scientific employees at each agency. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, from October 1979 to December 1980, EPA and FDA experienced a general expansion among scientists and engineers, and this was followed by a period of declining employment during calendar year 1981 which produced little net change in the number of scientific personnel during these periods. On the other hand, CPSC experienced losses of scientific personnel during the first period which continued to accelerate during the second period. RIF's played a negligible role in these changes, and most of the decline at the three agencies could be traced to nonreplacement of departing scientists during calendar year 1981. The GAO analysis showed that only one group of scientists, general engineers at EPA, appeared to have been noticeably depleted, which may have been due to reclassification rather than personnel turnover. During calendar year 1981, nearly all groups at both agencies sustained personnel losses. Attrition at EPA was approximately equivalent for scientists and nonscientists, while nonscientists at FDA suffered greater attrition. Nearly all groups in CPSC sustained losses in both periods, resulting in an overall decline of 87 percent in the number of scientific personnel engaged in regulatory licensing and enforcement.

120388
[Comments on a Critique of GAO's Radioactive Waste Ocean Dumping Report]. RCED-83-45; B-204946. December 17, 1982. ***Released*** January 19, 1983. 3 pp. plus 2 enclosures (13 pp.).
Report to Rep. Norman E. D'Amours, Chairman, House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Oceanography Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Refer to EMD-82-9, October 21, 1981, Accession Number 116900.

Issue Area: Energy: Actions To Reduce Risks of Nuclear Fuel Cycle (1623); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy; Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Oceanography Subcommittee; *Rep.* Norman E. D'Amours.
Abstract: GAO was asked to review a critique which disagreed with the overall conclusions of a GAO report on the hazards of past low-level radioactive waste ocean dumping. The report concluded that those concerns have been overemphasized and that monitoring past dump sites is of limited value in developing future ocean-dumping regulations. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO believes that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of its earlier report are valid, its presentation of scientific studies and opinion is accurate, and the methodology used is sound. The critique did not address much of the evidence which GAO used to derive its conclusions. It did not mention agency estimates that only small volumes of radioactive wastes have been dumped, nor did the critique recognize that: (1) most of the radioactivity has decayed; and (2) there is an absence of baseline data on radioactivity already present at dump sites when dumping began and a lack of information on specific types, quantities, and locations of radioactive materials that were dumped. Given limited federal funds, GAO believes that any scientific opportunity that might be gained from monitoring past dump sites could be better obtained by monitoring future dump sites. Despite critique assertions to the contrary, the GAO report neither advocated nor opposed a

resumption of ocean dumping of radioactive waste. It did agree with a critique's major conclusion that test sites, uncontaminated by past ocean dumping, should be monitored to establish baseline data necessary to effectively monitor the effects of future ocean dumping of radioactive waste.

120433

[Views on EPA Implementation of Clean Air Act]. B-208593. December 30, 1982. 1 p. plus 1 attachment (7 pp.).

Letter to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, (for Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General).

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act.

Abstract: GAO was asked to comment on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) statement that it intends to be appropriately flexible in reviewing State Implementation Plan revisions of the Clean Air Act. GAO concluded that current EPA enforcement policies appear to be at odds with its published policies and, in some instances, with the act itself. GAO stated that it is important for Congress to: (1) clarify its expectations of EPA and the states' roles for implementation of the act; (2) reaffirm necessary requirements; (3) modify unproductive or overly burdensome requirements; and (4) restate the deadlines and penalties for noncompliance.

120434

[Views Concerning Legality of Waiver Under Clean Air Act]. B-205755. December 6, 1982. 15 pp.

Letter to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, (for Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General).

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Anafuel Unlimited.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act (42 U.S.C. 2604(h)(6)). Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 348). Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553). Clean Air Act (P.L. 95-95; 42 U.S.C. 7545(f); 91 Stat. 685). 40 C.F.R. 3.103. 40 C.F.R. 3.103(e). Executive Order 12291. 43 Fed. Reg. 24131. 46 Fed. Reg. 13193. 46 Fed. Reg. 21695. H.R. 6161 (95th Cong.). H. Rept. 95-564. S. 252 (95th Cong.). S. Rept. 95-127. 5 U.S.C. 551(3). 5 U.S.C. 551(14). 91 Stat. 763.

120436

Better Procedures Needed for Inspections at Sewage Treatment Construction Projects. RCED-83-73; B-207211. January 26, 1983. 29 pp. plus 1 appendix (2 pp.).

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Baltas E. Birkle, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Adequacy of Fiscal and Management Integrity of the Construction Grant Program With Existing Controls and Resources (2223).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Environmental Pollution Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act (P.L. 84-660). Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). 40 C.F.R. 35.935-8.

Abstract: GAO reviewed 18 sewage treatment plant construction projects in five states to: (1) evaluate how well the Army Corps of Engineers is carrying out its inspection monitoring function for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and (2) the adequacy of the resident inspector's recordkeeping process to record construction deficiencies. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that a national interagency agreement between EPA and the Corps broadly defines the Corps' construction monitoring responsibility. The Corps provides its onsite reviewers with only general guidance for performing their work. GAO found that, in some cases, the Corps reviews are not sufficiently detailed to ensure that the resident inspectors perform their work properly; in other cases, the review results are not always reported to the grantees, states, or EPA. Properly performing the monitoring reviews would help give EPA assurance that projects are built in accordance with approved plans and specifications. EPA has issued a general construction inspection guide to all grantees which only suggests that an accurate daily inspection report should be prepared. Therefore, resident inspectors have not been instructed to document day-to-day construction deficiencies or to maintain material test reports, correspondence, or deficiency reports. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The EPA Administrator, with the assistance of the Corps of Engineers, should develop and implement standard operating procedures for monitoring the resident inspectors' activities. These procedures should provide specific guidance on how to review the residents' inspection activities; establish timeframes for monitoring, when feasible, critical construction events; and provide criteria for assessing the adequacy of the residents' inspection activities. The EPA Administrator, with the assistance of the Corps of Engineers, should establish recordkeeping guidelines for resident inspectors on construction grant projects for documenting construction deficiencies, highlighting the deficiencies that need follow-up, and maintaining important construction records. The Administrator should issue these guidelines to grantees suggesting better documenting of resident inspections and, if residents do not follow the guidance, EPA should include as a condition in its grant awards that the resident inspectors follow the guidance.

120446

[Information on Three Hazardous and Solid Waste Disposal Sites in Maryland]. RCED-83-91; B-210383. January 14, 1983. ***Released*** January 31, 1983. 7 pp.

Report to Rep. Barbara A. Mikulski; by Baltas E. Birkle, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Barbara A. Mikulski.

Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980. 40 C.F.R. 122.23.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO examined three hazardous and solid waste disposal sites in Maryland to determine how the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) implementation of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act is progressing. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Congress enacted the conservation legislation to regulate the management of hazardous waste and improve waste disposal practices. The act provides that, after authorization by EPA, the states are to administer their own hazardous waste programs. The act allows states to obtain interim authorization from EPA while working toward final program authorization. GAO stated that, in the past, poor inspection and enforcement procedures, lack of adequate management controls, and illegal dumpings had occurred at the sites in question. However, EPA and Maryland officials stated that their current activities at the sites are adequate and, in their opinion, the sites currently represent a low degree of hazard.

120476

San Francisco's Wastewater Treatment Program Needs Reexamination and Better Management. MASAD-83-11; B-205654. February 1, 1983. 3 pp. plus 2 appendices (21 pp.).

Report to Anne M. Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Walton H. Sheley, Jr., Director, GAO Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.

Issue Area: Procurement of Major Systems: Congressional Information on the Issues Concerning Systems for Which Funds Are Requested (3001); Environmental Protection Programs: Reduction of the Social and Economic Impacts of Environmental Protection Programs on the Public and Private Sectors (2215).

Contact: Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; California: State Water Resources Control Board.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on the Budget; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs: Energy and the Environment Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Budget; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Water Resources Subcommittee.

Abstract: GAO reviewed the effectiveness of construction planning and management of San Francisco's Wastewater Treatment Program which is intended to reduce pollution of the San Francisco Bay and Pacific Ocean. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that reduced federal funding and uncertain state and city funding raise serious questions over the completion of the program in the foreseeable future. The city may not be able to afford such a costly undertaking if funds from other sources are not forthcoming. The outcome will not only result in construction delays, but also in the inability to fully achieve established water quality goals. GAO questioned whether an additional $2 billion should be spent to attain uncertain additional water quality benefits after the core systems are complete. The project design and change order reviews have been limited because of reduced resources. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should suggest to the state board that it fund limited additional work until the initial systems under construction are completed and until the city analyzes the costs and benefits of the remaining project. The Administrator, EPA, should amend the EPA agreements with the California State Board and the Corps of Engineers to require the state board to made periodic design reviews which include structural, electrical, and mechanical elements. The Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), should amend the EPA agreements with the California State Board and the Corps of Engineers to require the Corps to promptly disclose to the city deficiencies it identifies during inspections.

120514

International Oil Pollution: Liability and Compensation Arrangements Affecting the United States. ID-83-19; B-210583. February 3, 1983. 22 pp. plus 2 appendices (4 pp.).

Staff Study by Frank C. Conahan, Director, GAO International Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (1651); International Affairs: Management of Foreign Affairs (0614); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).

Contact: International Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Transportation; Department of State; Department of Energy; Environmental Protection Agency.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act. Outer Continental Oil Shelf Lands Act. Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978. Deepwater Port Act of 1974. Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act. Limitation of Shipowners' Liability Act. H.R. 85 (97th Cong.). S. 681 (97th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO conducted a study to: provide pertinent background about the incidence and impact of ocean oil spills; describe the current liability and compensation regimes; identify the principal perceived defects of the present arrangements; and discuss alternatives that have been proposed. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that a patchwork of international, national, and state arrangements currently governs ocean oil spill cleanup, liability coverage, and damage compensation. Informed observers agree that the system does not effectively protect U.S. public and private interests from the risks of ocean oil pollution. In particular, the present arrangements: require an unnecessary expenditure of federal funds; compel spill victims to seek damage compensation under costly, time-consuming procedures; create uncertainty as to the spiller's liability and subject oil and tanker industries to multiple claims; entail duplication of federal administrative arrangements and activities; can produce inadequate and erratic funding to defray cleanup costs; rely heavily on voluntary agreements which have their own limitations and uncertainties; and reduce U.S. Government influence within the international forums where the standards and procedures for a uniform international liability and compensation regime are currently under review. To overcome such defects, ratification of the pertinent international conventions, enactment of a U.S. statute that would provide a uniform and comprehensive federal regime, or a combination of both have been proposed. To date, the Senate has declined to give consent to U.S. ratification of the international conventions primarily because coverage and limits are considered inadequate. In addition, the international conventions would preempt the laws of states concerning liability limits and financial responsibility requirements.

120595

Synthetic Fuels Corporation's Use of an Expert Panel and a Staff Assistance Agreement. RCED-83-52; B-209655. February 2, 1983. 3 pp. plus 2 appendices (12 pp.).

Report to Sen. James A. McClure, Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: More Cost-Efficient, Effective Management of the Synthetic Fuels Corporation (1675).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: United States Synthetic Fuels Corp.; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Sen.* James A. McClure.
Authority: Energy Security Act.
Abstract: Congressional concern has been expressed over the propriety of: (1) the Synthetic Fuels Corporation's (SFC) establishment of an outside expert advisory group, referred to as a study panel; and (2) an SFC agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These activities are two of the efforts SFC has undertaken since its establishment in 1980 by the Energy Security Act to assist in the development of U.S. synthetic fuels industry. GAO reviewed these efforts to determine the origins and evolution of the study panel and the EPA agreement activities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found nothing to indicate that either the use of the panel or the EPA agreement was unauthorized under the Energy Security Act. However, GAO believes that an earlier announcement of the panel activity to the entire Board of Directors and, at a minimum, to other senior SFC executives would have been more prudent. In addition, SFC should have advised the panel members earlier of the intended scope of the panel. GAO also found contrasting opinions on the panel's purpose and on the political and technical balance of the original group of experts who were scheduled for a January meeting that was canceled. With respect to the EPA agreement, little activity has occurred and none is presently planned. EPA and SFC completed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which provides for temporary assignment of EPA employees to SFC. Nevertheless, with the exception of the Presidential management intern who worked at SFC in the spring of 1981 prior to the MOU, no EPA employees have been assigned to SFC. Furthermore, neither SFC nor EPA currently anticipates a need for the temporary assignment of EPA employees to SFC because SFC has established and begun staffing its own environmental office.

120637

[Water Project Construction Backlog of the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation]. February 23, 1983. 8 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Water Resources Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Refer to RCED-83-49, January 26, 1983, Accession Number 120642.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers; Bureau of Reclamation.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Water Resources Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.
Authority: Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-251).
Abstract: GAO testified before two congressional subcommittees on a GAO report which concerns the water project construction backlog. As of October 1, 1981, the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation had 934 authorized water projects which required about $60 billion to complete construction. In recent years there has been a trend for construction backlog costs to grow because construction funding has not sufficiently offset inflation and other project cost increases. GAO estimated that, with the annual construction funding of $1.4 billion, it will take the Corps about 16 years to complete its projects. New construction starts, rehabilitation of older facilities, and increasing operation and maintenance costs have added to the competition for available water resource funds. The Corps has legislation designed to help with the backlog problem, but its impact has been small. Under this legislation, 453 projects have been deauthorized, but most were deauthorized because they were not economically feasible or did not have local support. The Bureau has no such legislation. The major options available for reducing the backlog include: increasing the annual water project appropriation, requiring the non-federal sector to contribute a more substantial portion of project costs, or establishing a priority system. Establishing a priority ranking system would offer many potential benefits since marginal projects could be postponed, scaled down, or deauthorized while more economically and environmentally sound projects are built.

120687

Potential Impacts of Reducing EPA's Budget. RCED-83-75; B-209872. December 30, 1982. ***Released*** February 18, 1983. 51 pp. plus 4 appendices (9 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: General Purpose Fiscal Assistance: Other General Purpose Fiscal Assistance (852.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Procurement - Other Than Defense (990.4).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.
Authority: Clean Air Act. Small Business Act. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970. OMB Circular A-76. OMB Circular A-120.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO examined the possible impact of fiscal year (FY) 1982 and proposed FY 1983 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) budgets on the air and hazardous waste programs in 15 states and 3 localities, the implications of the eventual phaseout of state grant assistance, the evolving federal/state partnership, and the effects of budget reductions on EPA personnel and contracting activities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The proposed FY 1983 reductions motivated EPA and states to consider what their future roles would be in managing environmental programs with less federal financial assistance. Some states predicted a possible decrease in state environmental programs. Others indicated that they would consider returning to EPA some of the air and hazardous waste programs which have been delegated to them or not seeking authorization for programs not yet delegated. EPA, states, and others have expressed concern that, without federal financial assistance, inequity and inconsistency in achieving environmental goals may

result. EPA is changing its oversight policies of state programs from a detailed project-by-project review to an oversight that is focused more on results. GAO stated that EPA must assess the impact of budget reductions on its ability to provide oversight and take corrective action when states fail to perform as expected. Because of decreasing or uncertain funding, several states are considering adopting new fee systems or raising existing fees. However, such plans may create compliance disincentives or other unintended effects. In addition, EPA personnel and contracting activities may be effected by budget reductions.

121112

Regional Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Sites. RCED-83-48; B-194786. April 11, 1983. ***Released*** April 14, 1983. 36 pp. plus 6 appendices (19 pp.).

Report to Rep. Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; Rep. Barney Frank; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Actions To Reduce Risks of Nuclear Fuel Cycle (1623); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs Protecting Public Health and the Environment (2220).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; *Rep.* Barney Frank; *Rep.* Richard L. Ottinger.

Authority: Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act (P.L. 96-573). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National). Nuclear Waste Policy Act (P.L. 97-425). Atomic Energy Act of 1954. 10 C.F.R. 61.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed certain aspects of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act to: (1) evaluate the problems which states face in forming interstate or regional compacts; (2) assess the ability of individual states or regional compacts to establish low-level waste disposal sites by 1986; and (3) recommend alternative contingency plans for states that are not unable to meet the time schedule. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** All of the nation's commercial low-level wastes are presently disposed of in three burial sites which are not adequate to handle the expanding volumes of low-level waste. In addition, the states where these sites are located have made it clear that they will no longer bear the entire burden of low-level waste disposal, and they are actively forming regional interstate compacts and attempting to create new disposal sites. Although the compact agreements have been completed or are nearing completion, none of them have received congressional approval and only two regions will have operating disposal sites by the target date established by the act. Therefore, possible alternatives are being sought by the remaining states for temporarily managing low-level wastes. These alternatives include: an extension of the exclusion date in the act; temporary disposal of commercial low-level wastes at Department of Energy low-level waste burial sites, which are currently used to dispose of wastes generated by defense programs; convincing the compact regions with operable sites to temporarily accept out-of-region waste; or the temporary storage of wastes in warehouse-type facilities until new disposal sites are available. In the view of GAO, the latter two alternatives are best. GAO recommended that federal agencies should continue to assist the states in forming regional groupings and help resolve technical problems. In addition, a high priority should be assigned to the completion of radiological standards for low-level waste disposal facilities.

121441

Information on Ocean Disposal of Municipal and Industrial Waste. RCED-83-161; B-166506. May 18, 1983. ***Released*** May 26, 1983. 5 pp. plus 3 appendices (33 pp.).

Report to Rep. Walter B. Jones, Chairman, House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Panama Canal and Outer Continental Shelf Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation and the Environment Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Oceanography Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries: Merchant Marine Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries; *Rep.* William J. Hughes; *Rep.* Norman F. Lent; *Rep.* Edwin B. Forsythe; *Rep.* Joel Pritchard; *Rep.* Norman E. D'Amours; *Rep.* Walter B. Jones.

Authority: Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Clean Water Act of 1977. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. City of New York v. Environmental Protection Agency, 543 F. Supp. 1084 (S.D.N.Y. 1981).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO provided information on issues relating to the ocean disposal of sewage sludge and industrial wastes. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In 1982, about 7.7 million wet tons of sewage sludge and about 1.1 million wet tons of industrial waste were dumped into the ocean. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates that, in comparison with 1980, 130 percent more sludge could be generated in coastal areas in the year 2000. Although the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ocean dumping regulations require that materials which unreasonably degrade the marine environment be phased out by December 1981, a federal court subsequently ordered EPA to extensively revise its ocean dumping regulations. GAO found that interest in using the ocean for sewage and industrial disposal continues and could increase in the future. GAO noted that opinions vary regarding the future of ocean dumping of industrial waste. There is a growing interest in an integrated waste management approach to disposal that minimizes human health and environmental risks at an affordable price. The consensus of governmental agencies and the scientific community is that more research is required to assess the risks and costs associated with land- and ocean-based disposal. EPA and NOAA are currently engaged in numerous projects that address this information gap.

121513

Questionable Practices in the Selection of Transportation Services for Small Lots of Hazardous or Sensitive Cargo. PLRD-83-70; B-211456. May 31, 1983. 3 pp. plus 4 appendices (23 pp.).

Report to Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary, Department of Defense; by Donald J. Horan, Director, GAO Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.

Issue Area: Logistics Management: Efficiency of the Distribution of Material and the Movement of Personnel (3814).

Contact: Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division.
Budget Function: National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Department of the Navy; Department of the Army; Department of the Air Force; Department of the Army: Military Traffic Management Command.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on the Budget; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Defense Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Armed Services; *Senate* Committee on Budget; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Defense Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Armed Services; *Sen.* Howard H. Baker.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed Department of Defense (DOD) policies and practices for procuring commercial transportation services for small lots of hazardous or sensitive cargo. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found a number of problem areas in the management of small-lot shipments of hazardous and sensitive cargo that resulted in excess transportation costs and lost opportunities to use the best possible transportation services. Specifically, GAO found that: (1) most of the cargo had been routed to truck companies, although air taxi rates and services were competitive with truck rates and services; (2) a specific air taxi operator received a greater portion of the traffic than another operator who was in a position to compete effectively; (3) military routing officials had not followed DOD policies and criteria on routing; and (4) overall and specific DOD cargo shipping requirements, such as the location of the traffic and its pickup and transit needs, were not being adequately transmitted to companies wishing to compete for DOD business. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) should compile, maintain, and use information related to installation shipping and receiving capability and to carrier performance that will ensure equitable consideration of both air taxi and truck carrier services in the routing of small lots of hazardous or sensitive cargo. MTMC should routinely make cost and other types of comparative analyses of both air taxi and truck service when routing small lots of hazardous or sensitive cargo. MTMC should enhance competition between air taxi operators and truck carriers by regularly disclosing to them the opportunities for them to participate in the business. MTMC should ensure that sufficient records are maintained to demonstrate to interested parties, such as carriers, that equitable cargo distribution policies are being followed.

121648
Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation With Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities. RCED-83-168; B-211461. June 1, 1983. ***Released*** June 14, 1983. 6 pp. plus 2 appendices (13 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; Del. Walter E. Fauntroy; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio; *Del.* Walter E. Fauntroy.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Toxic Substances Control Act.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO determined the correlation between the location of hazardous waste landfills and the racial and economic status of the surrounding communities in eight southeastern states. GAO also provided information on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) site location standards and permitting procedures. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that blacks make up the majority of the population in three of the four communities where the region's four offsite hazardous waste landfills are located. At least 26 percent of the population in these communities has an income below the poverty level. The determination as to where a hazardous waste landfill will be located is currently a state responsibility. However, effective January 1983, federal regulations require that selected sites meet minimal location standards, and EPA has begun its review process to determine whether the sites meet these standards. Federal legislation requires public participation in the hazardous waste landfill permit process, except for the approval of the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's). Because of delays in issuing final regulations, three of the four landfills in the region have not yet undergone the final permit process where public participation is required. The fourth PCB landfill has been subjected to the process and granted a permit, even though it was not required by federal regulations. Finally, GAO found that the EPA class permit proposal for less complex waste management facilities would limit public participation at the local level. However, class permits would apply to storage tanks, not landfills.

121653
[EPA and State Progress in Enforcing the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations]. June 15, 1983. 9 pp.
Testimony before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce: Transportation and Commerce Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Refer to CED-82-43, March 3, 1982, Accession Number 117664.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Health and the Environment Subcommittee.
Authority: Safe Drinking Water Act. EPA National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regs.
Abstract: Testimony was given concerning a GAO report which discussed how well the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the states have implemented provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act. GAO work indicated that compliance with these regulations was the exception rather than the rule. Almost all of the violations were incurred because required tests were not made rather than because water did not meet quality standards, and most of the violations occurred at small systems which often lacked a full-time and properly trained operator. Of the five states which GAO reviewed that are required to collect radioactive material as well as inorganic and organic chemical samples, two have not been collecting the required samples because of the lack of state funds and personnel. Enforcement actions in states reviewed ranged from none to minimal, followed no particular pattern, and were not as timely as they should have been. GAO was not able to evaluate an EPA small-system-compliance strategy because it has not been fully implemented. GAO has recommended that EPA develop and implement specific guidelines the states can use in developing their respective enforcement strategies. EPA reported that only 11 percent of all of its violations had been followed by public notification. When public notification did occur, the effectiveness of the notification was

questionable because of the time lag between the occurrence of the potential health hazard and notification to the users.

121691

Safety at the Navy's Seal Beach, CA, Weapons Station Has Improved. PLRD-83-87; B-168700. June 10, 1983. ***Released*** June 13, 1983. 19 pp. plus 7 appendices (12 pp.).
Report to Sen. Alan Cranston; by Donald J. Horan, (for Frank C. Conahan, Director), GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Issue Area: Facilities and Material Management: Effectiveness of Federal Agencies in Operating and Maintaining Their Facilities (0725).
Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.
Budget Function: National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of the Navy; Department of Defense; Department of the Navy: Naval Sea Systems Command: Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, CA.
Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Alan Cranston.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO evaluated safety at the Navy's Seal Beach Weapons Station to: review the Navy's actions to improve safety, address the surrounding community's major safety concerns about Seal Beach, and analyze the Navy's study of west coast ordnance activities. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that declining workloads have enabled Seal Beach to improve operating procedures for ordnance activities, thus improving safety, particularly in the wharf area. Regarding the community's safety concerns, GAO found that: (1) Seal Beach currently has no nuclear capabilities; (2) security at the facility appears satisfactory; (3) the Navy plans to upgrade those structures at the facility most vulnerable to earthquakes; (4) Seal Beach's air traffic hazards are no greater than those of other areas of southern California; (5) the facility is improving its management of hazardous materials; and (6) Seal Beach is increasing its disaster preparedness efforts. The Navy has not completed its study of west coast ordnance activities because of higher priority work. Instead, the Navy is contracting for a capital improvement and modernization study for all its ordnance activities.

121797

[Better Coordination Is Needed Between Pesticide Misuse Enforcement Programs and Programs for Certifying and Training Individuals To Apply Pesticides]. RCED-83-169; B-212122. July 1, 1983. 13 pp.
Report to William D. Ruckelshaus, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Improvement of the Regulation of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2225).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Health: Consumer and Occupational Health and Safety (554.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.
Authority: Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. 40 C.F.R. 171. 40 C.F.R. 171.4(b). 40 C.F.R. 171.6.
Abstract: GAO reviewed programs in Illinois and Minnesota under the Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training Program to determine whether they are addressing major pesticide misuse problems. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Illinois and Minnesota have not linked the certification and training and enforcement programs to deter and reduce pesticide misuse. The review of programs to certify individuals as competent to use pesticides indicates that information on pesticide misuse is not routinely and systematically developed or used, even though the data are collected and maintained by the states as part of their pesticide enforcement efforts. Further, EPA evaluations of state programs have not addressed qualitative program elements but have concentrated on quantitative program outputs. GAO noted that EPA has neither developed criteria for evaluating test criteria nor, within 7 years, conducted in-depth test reviews. Finally, GAO found that Illinois' and Minnesota's pesticide commercial examinations do not meet all federal certification requirements. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The EPA Administrator should direct that action be taken to include a requirement in state cooperative agreements that states develop basic program management information on major pesticide misuse problems for use by certification and training programs. The EPA Administrator should direct that action be taken to develop guidance for EPA regions to evaluate state efforts in using pesticide misuse data to ensure that its certification and training programs are addressing the major pesticide misuse problems that the state is experiencing. The EPA Administrator should direct that action be taken to develop criteria and guidance for EPA regions to evaluate state commercial applicator examinations.

121846

The Army's Program To Assure the Security and Safety of the Chemical Munitions Stockpile Is Comprehensive and Effective. NSIAD-83-6; B-211808. July 1, 1983. 24 pp. plus 2 appendices (3 pp.).
Report to Rep. William Nichols, Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services: Investigations Subcommittee; by Frank C. Conahan, Director, GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Issue Area: Logistics Management: Storage and Preservation Systems for Control of Material Inventories (3805); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.
Budget Function: National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Department of the Army.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Armed Services: Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* Larry J. Hopkins; *Rep.* William Nichols.
Authority: Armed Forces Appropriation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-121). Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1983 (P.L. 97-252). P.L. 91-672. A.R. 50-6. A.R. 50-6.1.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the Army's programs to securely and safely maintain the toxic chemical munitions and bulk chemical agency stockpile within the United States. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In 1977, the Army established the Chemical Surety Program to ensure that all toxic chemical agents and related munitions in its custody are maintained in a manner that enhances safety, security, and reliability. GAO found that security efforts related to chemical storage appear to comply with regulations except in the areas of training of augmentation reserve forces and perimeter alarm systems. Achieving and maintaining this compliance has cost millions of

dollars. Each site provides multiple layers of protection to prevent unauthorized access. None of the storage sites yet have an operational perimeter alarm system; however, planning for such a concept is in progress and authorization is now being sought to accept the procedures currently being used for annual training exercises. Inspection and monitoring ensure that comprehensive and stringent safety procedures are being followed. Should a chemical accident occur, each site has a detailed plan for evacuation of the local area. For the past 5 years the extent of chemical accidents has been minimal, and all accidents were immediately and thoroughly investigated, none led to serious personal injury, and no chemical contamination was released into the atmosphere. Eventually, all chemical munitions will require disposal which is restricted by law and is costly.

121942
[The Air Force and Navy Should Have Coordinated and Better Managed Their Hush House Programs]. NSIAD-83-27; B-212339. July 19, 1983. 2 pp. plus 3 enclosures (7 pp.).
Report to Lawrence J. Korb, Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics); by Henry W. Connor, Senior Assistant Director, GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Issue Area: Logistics Management: Alternative Logistics Concepts, Structures, and Policies To Provide Necessary Mission Support (3801).
Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.
Budget Function: National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Department of the Air Force; Department of the Navy.
Abstract: GAO had expressed concern because the Air Force planned to spend more than $223 million to buy hush houses which suppress noise generated in testing aircraft jet engines without having firmly established its requirements or coordinated its program with the Navy's. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO has found that few such houses can be justified as being needed to comply with environmental regulations. The Air Force requires noise suppression for all of its aircraft engines, while the Navy provides noise suppression only if required to do so by the community. Previously, GAO reported that the services could save millions of dollars by buying only those noise suppression houses that are environmentally required, by establishing requirements based on actual need instead of the number of aircraft assigned, and by using a standard noise suppression house to the maximum extent possible at both Air Force and Navy installations. In response to previous recommendations, the Air Force is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of this requirement, the Navy is buying a noise suppression house designed by the Air Force, and the Secretary of Defense will continue to examine these ongoing actions to ensure that the minimum number of required noise suppression houses are built at the lowest possible cost. In view of these commendable actions, GAO plans no further work in this area.

122025
[GAO Work Related to the Toxic Substances Control Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act]. July 29, 1983. 9 pp.
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee.
Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act. Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.
Abstract: GAO discussed its work concerning the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (IFRA). Since TSCA enactment in 1976, GAO has issued four reports which address EPA efforts to implement the legislative requirements of the act, EPA regulatory action on specific chemicals, and EPA use of voluntary testing agreements. GAO has two reviews underway which concern the new EPA chemicals program and EPA use of various TSCA authorities to investigate and regulate existing chemicals. Since the early 1970's, GAO has issued 17 reports concerning IFRA and EPA efforts relative to it, dealing primarily with: (1) the registration, control, and use of individual pesticides; (2) EPA policies and procedures for registering and re-registering pesticides; and (3) EPA effectiveness in enforcing compliance with registration requirements. The most recent report recommended that guidance be developed for EPA regional offices to assess state efforts in identifying major misuse problems and inadequate application practices.

122111
[Interim Report on Establishment of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the Adequacy of Superfund Staff Resources]. HRD-83-81; B-207182. August 10, 1983. 7 pp.
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Richard L. Fogel, Director, GAO Human Resources Division.

Issue Area: Health Programs: Effectiveness of Federal Efforts To Improve Health Through Control of Environmental Health Hazards (1266); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Human Resources Division.
Budget Function: Health (550.0); Health: Consumer and Occupational Health and Safety (554.0); Natural Resources and Environment (300.0); Health: Prevention and Control of Health Problems (551.2).
Organization Concerned: Department of Health and Human Services; Environmental Protection Agency; Public Health Service: Centers for Disease Control: Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510). S. 1285 (97th Cong.).
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO conducted a review of Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) responsibilities under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act which authorized the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a Superfund Program to clean up toxic waste sites and HHS to establish a new Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to carry out the act's health-related activities. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO found that, although the agency was established in 1983, HHS is operating the program under essentially the same interagency arrangement, involving several Public Health Service (PHS) agencies, that has been in effect since 1981. This approach has reduced the priority of Superfund activities and resulted in program delays.

Further, PHS has not yet developed procedures detailing how the Superfund responsibilities will be carried out. Although Congress required HHS to establish a separate agency to ensure some independence and priority for Superfund activities, the activities have been integrated into existing organizations and have been delayed because of competition with other agency responsibilities. They have also been hampered because of the level of staff resources allowed relative to the amount of funds appropriated by Congress. Because of the lack of staff, officials expect to eliminate virtually all long-term health studies, registries, and laboratory projects.

122240

Status of Commerce's Implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Research Coordination Act of 1980. RCED-83-167; B-205349. August 31, 1983. 8 pp. plus 9 appendices (33 pp.).

Report to Sen. Charles McC. Mathias, Chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs: Governmental Efficiency and the District of Columbia Subcommittee; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effective Implementation of Water Pollution Control Activities and Programs (2222).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Commerce; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Governmental Affairs: Governmental Efficiency and the District of Columbia Subcommittee; *Sen.* Charles McC. Mathias.

Authority: Chesapeake Bay Research Coordination Act of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 3001). Advisory Committee Act (Federal).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed implementation efforts of the Chesapeake Bay Research Coordination Act of 1980 at the Department of Commerce. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The act's basic objective is to coordinate research of the Chesapeake Bay area and to establish a research board which is required to develop a research plan, periodically review federal research programs pertaining to the Bay, and submit an annual report to Congress and the Governors of Maryland and Virginia. The Governors initiated actions with Commerce to establish an ad hoc committee to help the states develop a research plan. The ad hoc committee later expanded its scope. However, funds have not been available to the committee and members are only involved on a part-time basis. GAO found that, although the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration believes that the act's objectives can be achieved by the ad hoc committee, no progress has been made. GAO believes that Commerce's actions do not fully implement the act in the manner prescribed by Congress because Commerce has made little progress toward achieving the act's basic objective and specific requirements and has not assumed a lead role in coordinating federal research activities involving the Bay. GAO noted that a federal ad hoc committee interacting with Maryland and Virginia representatives is not the type of mechanism required by the act to implement its requirements.

122439

Delays in EPA's Regulation of Hazardous Air Pollutants. RCED-83-199; B-211085. August 26. 1983. ***Released*** September 20, 1983. 45 pp. plus 1 appendix (8 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Refer to Testimony, November 7, 1983, Accession Number 122773.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of the Clean Air Act and the Effect of Changes to the Act (2224).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Environmental Protection Agency: Science Advisory Board.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. New York State v. Gorsuch, Civ. No. NY-81-3151 (1983). Lead Industries Inc. v. EPA, 647 F.2d 1130 (D.C. Cir. 1980). Union Electric Co. v. EPA, 427 U.S. 248 (1976). TVA v. Hill, 437 U.S. 153 (1978).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO provided information on: (1) how the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed a list of 37 substances which are subject to review as hazardous air pollutants; (2) the procedures and practices followed by EPA in preparing health assessment documents; (3) Science Advisory Board (SAB) involvement in the hazardous air pollutant program; and (4) EPA progress in establishing standards. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** EPA developed a list of 43 potentially hazardous air pollutants based on a contractor study. This list was refined to 37 by adding 2 substances and removing several substances that were found to break down in the atmosphere or were produced in low volume. In 1981, EPA began developing a new procedure to allow it to more accurately screen and rank potentially hazardous air pollutants. EPA is also examining four other potentially hazardous substances and is considering analyzing others not on the original list. Because industry resistance to regulation is so intense, EPA believes that it must develop the best possible health case to avoid legal action. Therefore, EPA utilizes contractors and in-house experts to review and assess the health effects of each substance and to draft health assessment documents. SAB has disagreed with EPA over the sufficiency of data needed to show adverse health effects, and policy shifts since 1978 have caused additional delays concerning the type of information to be included in these documents. The resulting delays have increased the cost of health assessments and have delayed regulatory action on several substances. EPA will not make a regulatory decision on a pollutant until SAB has reviewed and approved the health assessment, which can involve returning to SAB several times for approval. Because the process takes about 2 years, EPA has been unable to meet the 180-day deadlines for proposing standards. In addition, EPA has failed to review three of the four hazardous substances with established standards within the mandated time period.

122523

Interim Report on Inspection, Enforcement, and Permitting Activities at Hazardous Waste Facilities. RCED-83-241; B-212808. September 21, 1983. ***Released*** October 5, 1983. 4 pp. plus 6 appendices (19 pp.).

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Refer to Testimony, November 16, 1983, Accession Number 122839.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.
Abstract: GAO reviewed the federal regulatory program for hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities, focusing on ground water monitoring, inspection and enforcement activities, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permitting program for hazardous waste facilities. GAO performed this work in four states, all of which had primary inspection responsibility under interim authorization from EPA. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Under federal regulations, about 1,350 hazardous waste management facilities must institute ground water monitoring programs. GAO found that 78 percent of the facilities in two of the states visited were not in compliance with federal regulations. The other states did not know the extent of noncompliance in their states because they had not inspected most of their facilities for compliance. EPA has concluded that there has been considerable noncompliance with monitoring standards nationwide. Federal regulations also require that waste facility operators demonstrate their ability to finance closure and postclosure activities when the facility ceases operations. GAO found that none of the states visited require their inspectors to routinely evaluate the adequacy of closure and postclosure plans. EPA has concluded that most such plans are inadequate, although the extent of noncompliance nationwide is unknown. GAO found that, while EPA and state inspections and facilities may have improved, enforcement efforts aimed at hazardous waste facilities have not been extensive. In addition, GAO reported that final permits have been issued to only 24 of the estimated 8,000 hazardous waste facilities expected to require such permits. GAO contends that final permitting is important because facilities with interim status need not comply with all the technical and design standards that EPA believes necessary to protect human health and the environment. Because so few permits have been issued, GAO believes that it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the EPA permitting process.

122687
Information on Disposal Practices of Generators of Small Quantities of Hazardous Wastes. RCED-83-200; B-204242. September 28, 1983. ***Released*** October 28, 1983. 3 pp. plus 11 appendices (27 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the problems caused by the disposal of hazardous waste into solid waste landfills by small-quantity generators of such waste. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that: (1) although federal grants for small-quantity waste generator programs were eliminated in fiscal year 1982, officials in three of the four states visited by GAO indicated that they were able to increase state funding or make other program adjustments necessary to limit the impact on their programs; (2) most states have added additional restrictions to the federal regulations on the disposal of hazardous waste in solid waste landfills; (3) sewer disposal of hazardous waste at small-quantity generators may be a potential problem; (4) the presence of hazardous waste in solid waste landfills has resulted in few documented occupational safety or health problems' being reported; and (5) two of the four states visited by GAO were experiencing ground water contamination at some of their solid waste landfills.

122727
Removing Barriers to the Market Penetration of Methanol Fuels. RCED-84-36; B-207090. October 27, 1983. 53 pp. plus 3 appendices (14 pp.).
Report to Rep. Philip R. Sharp, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Government Steps To Reduce the Effects of an Import Disruption (1676).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0); Transportation: Ground Transportation (401.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Department of Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; *Rep.* Philip R. Sharp.
Authority: Clean Air Act. 28 C.F.R. 50.6.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO identified and assessed the barriers to methanol's market penetration as a transportation fuel and suggested possible government actions, short of expensive subsidies, which might eliminate or diminish market impediments. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Methanol has not emerged as a major transportation fuel because large investments are necessary to bring sufficient fuel and vehicles to the national retail level, and prospective return on investment has been inadequate to convince fuel producers and auto manufacturers to enter the market. Auto manufacturers are unwilling to produce cars designed to run on methanol fuels until the fuel is widely available at the retail level, and methanol producers are unwilling to invest in a fuel that has few customers. To help create a demand for methanol fuels or vehicles, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could provide a blanket waiver for fuel blends within certain limits and develop appropriate emission standards in anticipation of market development. In addition, EPA and the Department of Transportation could establish an equivalency factor to allow the comparison of the fuel economy of methanol with that of gasoline or diesel fuels. The government might also cooperate with private product testing associations to develop appropriate standards for the production, storage, and use of methanol. Allowable producers' cooperation could be defined in consultation with the Department of Justice to minimize the chance of formal antitrust actions. Converting the federal motor vehicle fleet to methanol fuels might have a positive psychological effect. However, the development of a market for methanol fuel may not reduce U.S. reliance on imported energy in the short term, because foreign producers of methanol may enjoy a significant price advantage.

122773

[EPA's Progress in Regulating Hazardous Air Pollutants]. November 7, 1983. 9 pp. plus 2 attachments (3 pp.).

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Refer to RCED-83-199, August 26, 1983, Accession Number 122439.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Environmental Protection Agency: Science Advisory Board.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Air Act.

Abstract: Testimony was given on a GAO report on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) procedures and problems in listing and regulating hazardous air pollutants under the Clean Air Act. Since the passage of the act in 1970, EPA has identified only seven substances as hazardous air pollutants and has established emission standards for only four of them. GAO found that various policy shifts and uncertainty over the type and amount of scientific data needed to support regulatory action were contributing factors to delays in identification and regulation. EPA has identified 37 potentially hazardous air pollutants and plans to conduct exposure and health assessments on them to determine which should be considered for possible regulation. GAO believes that EPA needs to direct its efforts toward the most potentially hazardous chemicals and develop a plan to conduct assessments in accordance with substances' priority ranking. GAO also found that the EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) review procedure delays health assessment documents. SAB and EPA have disagreed over the sufficiency of data and the best method to characterize a substance's potential adverse health effects. GAO believes that EPA and SAB need to review the current process and reach a mutual agreement on ways to accelerate the review process and the closure of health assessment documents. Further, GAO found that there have been significant delays in setting standards after SAB review. Finally, GAO found that, when establishing standards, EPA has considered economic and technological factors in adopting a regulatory control strategy as well as considering health risks. GAO believes that Congress intended that EPA establish standards to eliminate public health risks and did not intend economic factors or technological feasibility to be relevant considerations in setting standards.

122839

[EPA and State Inspection, Enforcement, and Permitting Activities at Hazardous Waste Facilities]. November 16, 1983. 7 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Refer to RCED-83-241, September 21, 1983, Accession Number 122523.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee.

Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.

Abstract: Testimony was presented concerning a GAO report on inspection, enforcement, and permitting activities at hazardous waste facilities. GAO found that many facilities are not complying with federal regulations requiring the owners and operators of certain hazardous waste facilities to institute ground water monitoring programs or document their eligibility to waive monitoring requirements. Two primary reasons for noncompliance are the technical complexity surrounding the proper location and construction of wells and the high costs of installing them. To improve the situation, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has made facilities subject to ground water monitoring requirements a high inspection priority for 1984. Federal regulations also require owners and operators of hazardous waste facilities to demonstrate their ability to finance closure and postclosure activities when the facilities cease operations. GAO found that the states it reviewed did not routinely perform detailed evaluations of facility closure plans and cost estimates and could not evaluate the adequacy of their financial assurance instruments. Since it has been reported that facility closure plans are inadequate, EPA has also made the review of facility closure plans and cost estimates a high priority for fiscal year 1984 and plans to provide additional training guidance in plan evaluation and cost estimation. GAO found that, through October 1983, only 80 of the estimated 8,000 facilities required to have permits had received final permits, and EPA estimates that permitting of all facilities could extend to 1993. Due to the long period of time involved, EPA has established priorities for permitting, giving land disposal facilities top priority and storage and treatment facilities the lowest priority.

122877

[Evaluation of the Environmental Protection Agency's Inspector General Audit of Superfund Expenditures and Implementation of the Inspector General's Recommendations]. RCED-84-31; B-211463. October 19, 1983. ***Released*** November 18, 1983. 9 pp.

Report to Rep. Michael L. Synar, Chairman, House Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; Rep. James H. Scheuer, Chairman, House Committee on Science and Technology: Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment Subcommittee; Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology: Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Rep.* John D. Dingell; *Rep.* James H. Scheuer; *Rep.* Michael L. Synar.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980. Prompt Payment Act (31 U.S.C. 1801).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed an audit, conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Inspector General, of fiscal year (FY) 1982 expenditures from the Hazardous Substances Response Trust Fund (Superfund) to determine the reasonableness of the objectives, scope, and methodology used by the Inspector General in performing the audit and to determine what corrective actions EPA has taken in response to the audit findings and recommendations.

Findings/Conclusions: GAO found that the objectives, scope, and methodology used in the audit were acceptable with one exception; about $22.5 million in interagency agreements relating to Superfund expenditures were not audited. GAO was informed that the audits of interagency agreements were not completed because of time constraints and that they would be completed in FY 1984. GAO also found that EPA has begun to take action in response to the recommendations, but it was too early to judge the effectiveness of those actions.

122963
Wastewater Dischargers Are Not Complying With EPA Pollution Control Permits. RCED-84-53; B-200800. December 2, 1983. 44 pp. plus 4 appendices (17 pp.).
Report to William D. Ruckelshaus, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effective Implementation of Water Pollution Control Activities and Programs (2222).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.
Authority: Federal Water Pollution Control Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal).
Abstract: GAO reviewed compliance with and the effectiveness of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).
Findings/Conclusions: NPDES was established by the Clean Water Act to limit the type and amount of pollution that a municipal or industrial facility may legally discharge into the nation's waterways. Under NPDES, discharge permits are issued, and GAO found that noncompliance with permit limits was widespread, frequent, and significant. Specifically, GAO estimated that 82 percent of the major dischargers sampled in six states exceeded their monthly average pollution permit limits at least once during an 18-month period and that 31 percent of those dischargers exceeding their limits were in significant noncompliance during that period. GAO stated that current enforcement practices allow noncompliance to continue for long periods and that thousands of dischargers have not been issued permits or hold expired permits. GAO noted that federal funding of water quality programs has significantly declined in recent years.
Recommendation To Agencies: The Administrator, EPA, should determine to what degree limited resources contribute to continued high noncompliance and enforcement problems in the permit program and present this analysis to Congress for its consideration in determining whether additional resources should be provided to improve the program's effectiveness. To address problems in the NPDES permit program that can be mitigated without substantial additional resources, the Administrator, EPA, should develop information on New York State's subsidy program for treatment plant operation and maintenance to determine if the program does in fact improve compliance rates. If significant contributions have been made by the subsidy program, EPA should communicate the results of the program to all the states. To address problems in the NPDES permit program that can be mitigated without substantial additional resources, the Administrator, EPA, should require EPA regional offices and encourage the states to follow up in a timely manner on missing and incomplete discharge monitoring reports. To address problems in the NPDES permit program that can be mitigated without substantial additional resources, the Administrator, EPA, should provide trend data from the EPA Laboratory Quality Assurance Program to regions and states to help them upgrade the quality of performance of laboratories providing data for discharge reports. To address problems in the NPDES permit program that can be mitigated without substantial additional resources, the Administrator, EPA, should issue guidance to EPA regions and states which establishes specific timeframes when voluntary compliance efforts should end and when formal enforcement measures should be undertaken. To address problems in the NPDES permit program that can be mitigated without substantial additional resources, the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), should submit legislative proposals to Congress which would give EPA authority to assess monetary penalties for permit noncompliance.

122962
Status of Air Force Efforts To Deal With Groundwater Contamination Problems at McClellan Air Force Base. NSIAD-84-37; B-213706. November 29, 1983. 42 pp.
Report to Rep. Vic Fazio; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Facilities and Material Management: Effectiveness of Federal Agencies in Operating and Maintaining Their Facilities (0725); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Air Force; Department of the Air Force: McClellan AFB, CA.
Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Vic Fazio.
Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601). Executive Order 12316. A.F.R. 161-44.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed Air Force efforts relating to ground water contamination at McClellan Air Force Base, focusing on: (1) the adequacy of a technical report that was to determine the extent of ground water contamination and suggest solutions; (2) Air Force procedures for releasing contamination data and reports to the public; (3) Air Force actions to improve its program for resolving pollution problems; and (4) procedures for ensuring safe drinking water. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the technical report was supposed to determine the extent of ground water contamination at McClellan and recommend actions to mitigate adverse environmental effects, restore the local environment to normality, and provide for future environmental monitoring. The contractor that performed the report concluded from the data collected that cleanup measures would be either ineffective or too costly. The Environmental Protection Agency and state and local regulatory agencies indicated that: (1) the study did not determine the amount and type of hazardous wastes at various disposal sites on the base; (2) off-base data were needed to completely identify the magnitude of contamination in the area; (3) the study may not have determined the rate and direction of contaminant movement; and (4) some of the monitoring and sampling procedures used in the study were questionable. GAO found that state and local efforts to deal with ground water contamination in the McClellan area have been hampered by a lack of information from and coordination with federal, state, and local regulatory agencies, but that the situation has been improved by several

recent Air Force actions designed to: (1) clarify responsibility for off-base actions; (2) reduce delays in the release of data to concerned groups outside the Air Force; and (3) improve coordination with regulatory agencies. GAO also found that, while McClellan has reduced contamination levels substantially since the problem was discovered, more work is necessary to ensure acceptable water quality.

123210

Improvements Needed in EPA's Inspector General Operations. AFMD-84-13; B-208718. October 21, 1983. ***Released*** January 9, 1984. 31 pp. plus 2 appendices (13 pp.).

Report to Rep. Patricia Schroeder, Chairman, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service: Civil Service Subcommittee; Rep. James H. Scheuer, Chairman, House Committee on Science and Technology: Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Refer to AFMD-81-94, August 29, 1981, Accession Number 116277; CED-80-100, May 29, 1980, Accession Number 112395; EMD-80-29, November 28, 1979, Accession Number 111167; and CED-80-4, October 24, 1979, Accession Number 110661.

Issue Area: Internal Auditing Systems: Audit and Investigative Coverage to Federal Programs and Operations Provided by Inspector General Offices and Federal Internal Audit Organizations (0207).

Contact: Accounting and Financial Management Division.

Budget Function: Financial Management and Information Systems: Internal Audit (998.3).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Environmental Protection Agency: Office of the Inspector General.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Government Operations; *House* Committee on Post Office and Civil Service: Civil Service Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology: Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Rep.* Patricia Schroeder; *Rep.* James H. Scheuer.

Authority: Inspector General Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-452). Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-255). 40 C.F.R. 3.401(b). H. Rept. 95-584. 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed Inspector General (IG) operations at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), focusing on: (1) the handling of investigations and audits; (2) the allocation of investigative resources; (3) the types of audits being performed; and (4) how certain requirements of the Inspector General Act of 1978 are being met. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that most IG audits and investigations had been properly handled but, in some cases, investigations were performed inconsistently or relevant matters were not thoroughly investigated. In particular, three investigations concerning sick leave abuse, telephone abuse, and favoritism were not handled in a manner consistent with similar investigations. In another investigation involving conflict of interest, the IG did not address certain factual questions bearing on the case before referring the case for possible prosecution. IG investigative resources were not being allocated efficiently; in 1982, IG investigators spent about 17 percent of their time performing functions that could have been performed by support personnel. GAO believes that additional personnel, combined with the use of screening criteria for cases, could enable the IG to better allocate resources and reduce a large backlog of uninvestigated allegations. In addition, the IG has not taken a balanced approach to audit coverage; GAO believes that, while clearing up the backlog of external contract grant audits is important, more coverage should be provided to internal programs and operations, such as EPA enforcement activities. GAO also found that the IG had acted inconsistently in protecting or disclosing the identities of complainants, in some cases leaving complainants open to possible retaliation, and in other cases protecting identities unnecessarily. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** To help ensure proper implementation of sections 7(b) and 5(d) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, the EPA Inspector General should establish: (1) procedures that allow for information provided to or acquired by the Inspector General during the course of an audit or investigation to be made available to persons having a need for such information, while also protecting the identity of an employee making a complaint; and (2) guidelines for determining when matters are "serious or flagrant" and therefore should be reported under section 5(d) of the Inspector General Act. In order that investigative resources be used more effectively, the EPA Inspector General should provide appropriate guidance for determining which matters to investigate, considering the dollar amount involved, the seriousness of the allegation, and the administrative remedies that are available to program officials. The EPA Inspector General should initiate adequate quality control procedures to ensure that hotline allegations are appropriately developed and that investigations and investigative reports are consistent with guidance established in the agency's Investigator's Handbook and are of uniform high quality.

123308

[DOE Needs To Evaluate Fully the Waste Management Effects of Extending the Useful Life of Nuclear Fuel]. RCED-84-111; B-202377. January 27, 1984. ***Released*** February 3, 1984. 10 pp.

Report to Rep. Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Effect of Federal Regulation on the Electric Utility Industry (1670).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy; Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Science and Technology; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Energy Conservation and Power Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Rep.* Richard L. Ottinger.

Authority: Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-425; 42 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.; 96 Stat. 2201; 96 Stat. 2201).

Abstract: GAO determined whether the Department of Energy (DOE) needs to do more to evaluate the potential impact of extended nuclear fuel burnup under its program for accepting spent commercial nuclear fuel under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, although DOE supports commercial utilities' creating their own storage programs which extend the useful life of nuclear fuel, it is uncertain whether the industry will pursue and develop such programs. GAO believes that DOE should continue to improve the spent fuel use and storage at commercial powerplants. In fiscal year 1984, Congress appropriated $4.5 million dollars for DOE to continue its participation in the program. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Energy should complete a full evaluation of the potential to extend fuel burnup and the effects on DOE efforts to subsequently manage the higher burnup fuel by considering the merits of continued government funding of the DOE extended fuel burnup program in terms of: (1) the potential budgetary costs; (2) the potential benefits and beneficiaries; and (3) the likelihood that the nuclear industry would continue extending fuel burnup. The Secretary of Energy should complete a full evaluation of the potential to extend fuel burnup and the effects on DOE efforts to subsequently manage the higher burnup fuel by quantifying, to the extent possible, the effect of increases in fuel burnup on its spent fuel acceptance schedule, and clearly identify the potential impact on its requirements for providing the necessary facilities and services to carry out the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The Secretary of Energy should report the results of this evaluation to cognizant congressional committees: (1) for their consideration of the DOE Mission Plan for carrying out the Nuclear Waste Policy Act; and (2) as another factor for their fiscal year 1985 budget deliberations on whether to continue funding for the DOE extended burnup program.

123357

DOD Can Make Further Progress in Controlling Pollution From Its Sewage Treatment Plants. NSIAD-84-5; B-166506. February 3, 1984. 35 pp. plus 3 appendices (19 pp.).

Report to Caspar W. Weinberger, Secretary, Department of Defense; by Frank C. Conahan, Director, GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Issue Area: Facilities and Material Management: Effectiveness of Federal Agencies in Operating and Maintaining Their Facilities (0725); Environmental Protection Programs: Improvement of the Regulation of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2225).

Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Department of the Navy; Department of the Army; Department of the Air Force.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Military Construction Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Armed Services; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Military Construction Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Armed Services.

Authority: Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (33 U.S.C. 1151; P.L. 92-500). Executive Order 12088.

Abstract: GAO evaluated Department of Defense (DOD) efforts to control pollution from its sewage treatment plant operations and attempted to determine whether DOD plants are meeting Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) discharge permit requirements. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, while DOD has made great efforts to improve its sewage treatment plants, these efforts have not been fully successful because: (1) the services have not always selected the most cost-effective treatment methods available; and (2) plant upgrades and modifications often have serious design and construction flaws that reduce plant efficiency. Major upgrades have occurred in the last 10 years at 11 of the 13 plants visited by GAO, but many of the upgraded plants are not meeting the sewage treatment levels expected because of design deficiencies. In addition, 11 of the 13 plants had been unable to consistently meet National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit requirements. GAO identified problems leading to noncompliance, including: (1) lack of specific guidance on how to ensure adequate operation, maintenance, and compliance; (2) lack of follow-up on problems found by DOD, EPA, and state environmental inspectors; (3) equipment deficiencies; (4) infiltration and inflow problems; and (5) deficient operation and maintenance practices. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** To guarantee that the most cost-effective sewage treatment methods are used, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that the services comply with DOD policy by carefully evaluating all feasible treatment alternatives, including regional or municipal tie-ins. To guarantee that the most cost-effective sewage treatment methods are used, the Secretary of Defense should require the services to provide written justifications supporting the selection of sewage treatment alternatives that differ from those recommended by cost-effectiveness studies. To guarantee that the most cost-effective sewage treatment methods are used, the Secretary of Defense should study and pilot test making one party responsible under contract for designing and constructing a treatment plant and for demonstrating, with plant operators, that the plant will meet discharge permit requirements before turning over the plant to the services for operation. The Secretary of Defense should direct and assist the services as necessary to provide more specific guidance to their bases on how to ensure adequate plant operation and maintenance in order to be in compliance with permit requirements. The Secretary of Defense should require the service secretaries to establish some formal means of ensuring that deficiencies identified at sewage treatment plants are followed up and corrected in a timely manner. The Secretary of Defense should revise DOD and service regulations to require a provision for operations and maintenance manuals to be in all military construction authorization documents (1391's) for improving sewage treatment. The Secretary of Defense should work with the Office of Personnel Management to revise the staffing guidelines for sewage treatment plants because of the ever increasing complexity of the treatment plants and processes.

123541

[Status of the DOD Installation Restoration Program at Mather Air Force Base and Sacramento Army Depot]. NSIAD-84-56; B-213706. February 29, 1984. 5 pp.

Report to Rep. Vic Fazio; by Frank C. Conahan, Director, GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Issue Area: Facilities and Material Management: Effectiveness of Federal Agencies in Operating and Maintaining Their Facilities (0725); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); National Defense: Department of Defense - Military (Except Procurement and Contracting) (051.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Defense; Department of the Army; Department of the Air Force.

Congressional Relevance: *Rep.* Vic Fazio.

Abstract: The Department of Defense's Installation Restoration Program (IRP) was established to: (1) identify and evaluate suspected problems associated with past hazardous waste disposal sites at military bases; and (2) control the migration of hazardous environmental contamination from those sites. Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO made a limited review of the status of IRP work at two military installations, an Air Force base and an Army depot. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In studying IRP work at the Air Force base, GAO found that a 1982 report was issued which identified 20 disposal sites as having a potential for contamination migration, and additional work to determine the types and quantities of contamination is ongoing. Further, IRP work at the Army depot identified hazardous waste disposal sites in a 1979 report, and the Army concluded its work at the depot with a 1981 study that addressed the potential for environmental pollution at that installation. However, because state and local environmental regulatory agencies raised questions about that report, the Army resumed some additional IRP work at that base.

123544

[Status of the General Accounting Office Reviews Concerning EPA's Superfund Activities]. March 1, 1984. 10 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee.

Authority: H.R. 4813 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: Testimony was given concerning GAO reviews of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund program which focused on: (1) state experiences with waste-end taxes and some of the implementation problems that might be encountered if there were a similar federal tax; (2) the EPA estimate of the cost to clean up the nation's worst hazardous waste sites; (3) the success of the Superfund removal program in responding to immediate hazardous waste threats; and (4) the progress being made by EPA to clean up three hazardous waste sites. The objectives of the waste-end tax systems of three states are to raise revenue to finance the cleanup of abandoned hazardous waste sites and encourage desirable waste management practices. GAO found that none of the three states have collected the revenue that they anticipated. Furthermore, GAO could not determine how successful the states have been in encouraging desirable waste management practices because of a lack of data and analysis. The successful implementation of a federal waste-end tax will require more information than is now available. EPA has estimated that 1,400 to 2,200 of the nation's most hazardous waste sites will likely require cleanup at a cost between $8.4 and $16 billion. However, GAO stated that these estimates are based upon assumptions that are difficult to confirm. GAO found that the Superfund removal responses may not represent the best use of limited resources, address the identified hazards effectively, or support long-term cleanup goals. Finally, GAO found that the site cleanup work at three National Priority List sites which predated Superfund is still not completed because a cleanup feasibility study has to be redone, additional studies are needed, and there has been incomplete waste removal and delayed fencing. Although the National Contingency Plan states that the cleanup actions selected should be cost effective, there is a lack of environmental standards for use in making cost-effectiveness determinations. Absent cleanup standards, GAO was unable to determine if the most cost-effective remedies are being selected.

123581

[EPA and State Progress in Administering the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program]. March 7, 1984. 10 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977.

Abstract: Testimony was presented on the management of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program, which is the principal means of controlling the nation's water pollution. GAO stated that noncompliance with permit limits for both industrial and municipal wastewater dischargers remains widespread, frequent, and significant. The persistence of noncompliance compromises the water quality and related environmental benefits of the billions of dollars invested in the construction and operation of wastewater treatment facilities. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state agencies rely heavily on discharge monitoring reports (DMR's) to inform them of permit noncompliance, and not submitting or submitting incomplete DMR's could conceal serious discharge noncompliance. Of the 531 major municipal and industrial dischargers reviewed by GAO, 8 percent did not submit one or more DMR's and 37 percent submitted one or more incomplete DMR's over an 18-month period. Further, the accuracy of DMR data is questionable in many cases. Compliance with permit conditions is the primary goal of enforcement action. GAO found many instances of noncompliance that continued for extended periods before formal enforcement action was taken and, in some cases, continued for years even after enforcement action had been taken. Thousands of applicants have not been given discharge permits, and thousands of dischargers hold expired permits; these situations reduce the potential of the permit program to control and reduce water pollution. GAO believes that the program's problems will likely continue because their underlying causes involve limited resources at both the federal and state levels.

123592

[GAO Review of the Department of Transportation's Pipeline Safety Program]. March 13, 1984. 13 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; by Oliver W. Krueger, Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Department of Transportation.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee.

Authority: Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968. Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Act of 1979. H.R. 3314 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: Testimony was given concerning a GAO review of the Department of Transportion's (DOT) program to regulate and enforce pipeline safety. DOT is responsible for establishing and enforcing safety standards for both interstate and intrastate pipelines; however, states may assume responsibility for enforcing the safety standards for intrastate pipelines within their borders and some have been inspecting interstate pipelines. Participating States can obtain federal reimbursements for up to 50 percent of the costs incurred in program operation. GAO found that DOT has not provided adequate inspection coverage of the interstate and intrastate pipeline operators for which it is responsible. In addition, its inspection coverage may be reduced further because some states are considering discontinuing a portion of their inspection activities. Furthermore, DOT does not have a viable means for requiring states to correct deficiencies in their programs or assume responsibility for additional intrastate pipeline systems. Therefore, GAO believes that there is a need to align DOT program responsibilities with the authority and resources needed to effectively carry out those responsibilities. GAO also noted that DOT monitoring of state programs needs improvement, and possible future increases in the DOT inspection workload may cause further deterioration in its already limited inspection coverage. Proposed legislation would require periodic testing of pipelines by their owners no less frequently than every 5 years. However, GAO believes that implementation of such a requirement at this time might be premature because of: a lack a tests and testing equipment, test costs, and a lack of resources within DOT to oversee the operator tests.

123701

Federal and State Efforts To Protect Ground Water. RCED-84-80; B-210829. February 21, 1984. ***Released*** March 22, 1984. 23 pp. plus 16 appendices (57 pp.).

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Safety of the Nation's Drinking Water Supplies (2226).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.). Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.). Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1201 et seq.). Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 7901 et seq.).

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed federal and state efforts to protect the nation's ground water supplies. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** About 50 percent of the nation's population depends on ground water for its drinking water supply. Ground water use has increased greatly in recent years and concern has grown regarding ground water contamination problems. GAO found that there is no comprehensive national data base on the extent of ground water contamination and that neither federal legislation nor federal funds are directed toward comprehensive ground water protection. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has not yet established drinking water standards for many organic chemicals contaminating ground water. Ground water protection is primarily viewed as a state responsibility, which accounts for differences in state standards and activities. The states which GAO studied favor a federal role in formulating, administering, and supporting a national ground water protection program. All cited a need for technical assistance and several states requested federal funding to further develop and implement their programs. Presently, EPA is working on a ground water protection strategy to strengthen the states' programs, address ground water problems, and establish the role of EPA. Congress has proposed establishing a national ground water commission.

123837

Federal Efforts To Control the Environmental and Health Effects of Synthetic Fuels Development. RCED-84-44; B-204290. March 9, 1984. ***Released*** April 4, 1984. 32 pp. plus 3 appendices (10 pp.).

Report to Rep. Philip R. Sharp, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: The Synthetic Fuels Corp. (1605); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: United States Synthetic Fuels Corp.; Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; *Rep.* Philip R. Sharp.

Authority: Energy Security Act (P.L. 96-294). Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1980 (P.L. 96-126). Supplemental Appropriations and Rescission Act, 1980 (P.L. 96-304). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-604). Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 (P.L. 95-95). Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (Federal) (P.L. 92-500). Clean Water Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-217). Safe Drinking Water Act (P.L. 93-523). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-580). Toxic Substances Control Act (P.L. 94-469). Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (P.L. 91-190). Trade Secrets Act (18 U.S.C. 1905).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the federal role regarding the environmental and health effects of synthetic fuels projects. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation (SFC) was established under the Energy Security Act to provide financial assistance to encourage private industry to undertake projects that produce synthetic fuels. The Environmental Protection Agency and the states use a permitting process to regulate hazardous emissions from synthetic fuels projects. SFC monitors this process to ensure that projects which it funds comply with environmental regulatory requirements. Because synthetic fuels is a new industry, further information is needed to identify potential harmful effects. Currently, there are no commercial-scale projects operating successfully in the United States which could provide extensive environmental and health data. Federal agencies have sponsored research on small-scale synthetic fuels projects which indicate that commercial-scale projects could emit toxic substances, some of which may be carcinogenic. GAO believes that data on the environmental and health effects of such emissions must be developed so that research needs and regulatory action can be determined. GAO noted that SFC has issued environmental monitoring plan guidelines that will require sponsors of projects which receive SFC funds to prepare quarterly and annual monitoring reports on project emissions.

123970

Cost-Benefit Analysis Can Be Useful in Assessing Environmental Regulations, Despite Limitations. RCED-84-62; B-210402. April 6, 1984. 33 pp. plus 4 appendices (28 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227); Economic Analysis of Alternative Program Approaches: Other Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (4051).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Management and Budget.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.). Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.). Water

Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Executive Order 12291. American Petroleum Industry v. Costle, 665 F.2d 1176 (D.C. Cir. 1981). American Textile Manufacturers Institute v. Donovan, 452 U.S. 490 (1981).

Abstract: GAO reported on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) major efforts to prepare cost-benefit analyses to support regulatory decisions, as required under Executive Order 12291. In addition, it discussed the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) review of those analyses and identified many problems that affect the potential usefulness of cost-benefit analyses for assessing environmental regulations. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found large gaps in the underlying scientific information which EPA uses to estimate the environmental benefits of its regulatory alternatives. EPA has also had difficulty determining how much people are willing to pay for health and environmental improvements. However, a cost-benefit analysis can still provide useful information to regulatory decisionmakers if EPA presents a range of dollar values which reflect the uncertainty of the estimates. Some environmental laws place more emphasis on the level of cleanup to be achieved than on the costs involved, and they may prohibit or limit the use of cost-benefit analyses in setting standards and regulations. In addition, cost-benefit analyses are not transmitted to Congress. Executive Order 12291 generally requires EPA and other federal agencies to provide a detailed cost-benefit analysis for any major regulation. However, the order allows for a great deal of flexibility in establishing the estimated costs of proposed regulations, and EPA has not always considered all important compliance costs to determine whether a proposed rule is a major regulation. In addition, GAO found that EPA failed to consider all possibilities in determining which alternative would yield a higher net benefit. GAO also found that EPA cost-benefit analyses generally highlighted only single-dollar estimates in summary form while ranges of estimates for other categories were available but not used. Despite these problems, OMB has generally accepted the EPA analyses. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress may wish to reexamine the need for restrictions which prohibit or limit cost-benefit analyses results from being used in environmental rulemaking in laws such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, in light of subsequent improvements in environmental protection, and consider easing or eliminating such restrictions on a case-by-case basis. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should direct the program offices performing cost-benefit analyses to use special techniques for analyzing uncertainty so that the most likely estimates of key regulatory effects can be isolated. The Administrator, EPA, should direct his budget office to highlight, in its annual budget submission to Congress, the priorities it has assigned to address the most critical data gaps affecting the precision of cost-benefit analyses and the measures planned to narrow those gaps. The Administrator, EPA, should transmit to the cognizant oversight committees in Congress, in executive summary form, those cost-benefit analyses that cannot be used in environmental rulemaking because of legal restrictions. The Administrator, EPA, should require that all elements of costs be considered and consistently applied when determining whether regulations are major or minor. The Administrator, EPA, should prominently document, for inclusion in the public record, and transmit to OMB a thorough explanation of the regulatory alternatives considered prior to the EPA decision to perform or not perform a cost-benefit analysis; this documentation should include a clear explanation as to why a particular alternative was considered and others were not so that decisionmakers and reviewing officials will have a complete understanding of the process. In addition, the Administrator should require that future cost-benefit analyses prominently include, in the executive summary: (1) a clear recognition of all costs and benefits, even those that cannot be quantified; (2) the range of uncertainties associated with those cost and benefit figures, as well as the sources of uncertainty; and (3) a comparison of all feasible alternatives.

124146

EPA's Preliminary Estimates of Future Hazardous Waste Cleanup Costs Are Uncertain. RCED-84-152; B-215014. May 7, 1984. ***Released*** May 16, 1985. 11 pp. plus 3 appendices (5 pp.).

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO evaluated the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund Task Force Preliminary Assessment study on what resources are needed to clean up the worst uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The preliminary EPA study reported that 1,400 to 2,200 hazardous waste sites may require cleanup as National Priority List (NPL) sites and that the federal government could spend between $8.4 and $16 billion to clean up the sites. The study provided uncertain data regarding the number of NPL sites, cleanup construction costs, and parties responsible for cleanup. GAO found that: (1) projected Superfund program costs can vary considerably; (2) total cleanup costs include expenses other than Superfund program costs; (3) the timing of cleanups is relevant to annual and future commitment; and (4) in the future, EPA may be able to estimate the reduction of health risks based on levels of cleanup. GAO noted that EPA is currently making more detailed analyses of the sites and associated cleanup costs which could improve future estimates.

124194

[Questions Concerning Proposed Legislation To Amend Clean Air Act]. B-214688. April 6, 1984. ***Released*** May 14, 1984. 4 pp.

Letter to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce; by Milton J. Socolar, (for Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General).

Contact: Office of the General Counsel.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Antideficiency Act (31 U.S.C. 1341). F.P.R. 1-15.205-17. H.R. 3400 (98th Cong.). H.R. 4404 (98th Cong.). H.R. 4906 (98th Cong.). OMB Circular A-122 Attach. B.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO discussed three bills that would amend the Clean Air Act to control certain pollutants, focusing on whether: (1) the interest costs incurred by utilities in complying with the proposed requirements could be paid from funds made available by the bills; and (2) the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would be making commitments in violation of the Antideficiency Act if the legislation were enacted. GAO determined that: (1) under two of the bills, interest costs for utilities would not be allowable; (2) the two bills could be amended to provide a statutory exception that would allow the payment of interest costs to utilities; and (3) the third bill would provide interest-free loans to help utilities meet their obligations under the bill. GAO also determined that EPA would not be violating the Antideficiency Act under any of the three bills.

124209

State Experiences With Taxes on Generators or Disposers of Hazardous Waste. RCED-84-146; B-214959. May 4, 1984. ***Released*** May 11, 1984. 34 pp. plus 7 appendices (15 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.). Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-580; 42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.). S. Rept. 96-848. H.R. 2627 (98th Cong.). H.R. 3129 (98th Cong.). H.R. 4813 (98th Cong.). S. 860 (98th Cong.). S. 1779 (98th Cong.).
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO obtained information on taxation of generators and disposers of hazardous wastes. Taxes of this type are known as waste-end taxes. GAO examined the operation of waste-end taxes in three states in an attempt to determine: (1) whether states have achieved their objectives in establishing waste-end taxes; (2) states' concerns about a proposed federal waste-end tax; and (3) potential problems in establishing and implementing a federal waste-end tax. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** States generally establish waste-end taxes to: (1) generate revenue for state hazardous waste cleanup efforts; and (2) encourage more desirable waste management practices, such as waste recycling. GAO found that: (1) in each state reviewed, the revenue generated by waste-end taxes fell short of anticipated revenue; and (2) none of the states had the information necessary to determine whether their waste-end taxes are encouraging desirable waste management practices. GAO also found that states are concerned about a federal waste-end tax because: (1) it could preempt state waste-end taxes; (2) imposing a federal tax on top of state waste-end taxes could increase the incentive to illegally dispose of wastes to avoid the tax; and (3) the more successful a waste-end tax is, the less revenue it generates, because waste generators and disposers are more likely to shift to tax-exempt alternatives. GAO compared three legislative proposals that would establish a federal waste-end tax and found that implementing each would require information on the types and quantities of hazardous wastes generated, and the treatment, storage, or disposal methods used. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) does not currently have adequate information available to meet the information needs of a federal waste-end tax program, but is implementing a reporting requirement for states that will provide some of the necessary data. EPA and other agencies have not yet estimated the time or cost to implement a federal waste-end tax.

124214

[The Malden and Elk-Pinch, WV, Wastewater Treatment Projects]. May 23, 1984. 11 pp.
Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Refer to CED-81-9, November 14, 1980, Accession Number 113976.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO discussed problems encountered at the Malden and Elk-Pinch, West Virginia, wastewater treatment projects. At the Malden project, GAO noted high user charges and serious performance problems which cause the plant to continually exceed its water pollution control permit limits. Residents have failed to hook into the service in large numbers and some are delinquent in paying bills because they claimed that the service was poor. GAO observed that the Elk-Pinch project defaulted because an agreement with consultants to finance the construction was not carried out as planned and payments were authorized in excess of budgeted amounts. Since the majority of the funding for both projects was provided under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants, GAO suggested that EPA exercise its oversight responsibility. In addition, GAO suggested that Congress reconsider a prior GAO recommendation that required EPA to test various options for construction grants funding.

124359

[Matters for Consideration When the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program Is Revised]. B-214960. May 2, 1984. 4 pp. plus 2 enclosures (3 pp.).
Report to Keith Colbo, Chairman, Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council; by F. Kevin Boland, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Pacific Northwest Power Act (1606).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).
Organization Concerned: Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council.
Authority: Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 839).
Abstract: GAO reviewed activities of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council to assess the council's compliance with section 4(h) of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO noted that the act requires the council to develop and adopt a conservation program to protect, mitigate, and enhance Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife affected by the basin's hydroelectric dams. GAO found that the council's program was developed according to the procedures, standards, and timeframe specified in the act. During the program development process, the council: (1) considered recommendations made by federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, Indian tribes, and other groups; (2) provided for public comment on the recommendations; and (3) based its program on the input. GAO stated that the program's development will not ensure the continuation of conservation measures in the river basin but will depend on acceptance and implementation by federal and state agencies, tribes, and other groups. Concerns expressed by the agencies and

groups include: (1) coordination of program management; (2) sources of program funding; (3) competition among water users; and (4) nonhydroelectric causes of fish and wildlife declines.

124425

EPA's Efforts To Clean Up Three Hazardous Waste Sites. RCED-84-91; B-214226. June 7, 1984. ***Released*** June 14, 1984. 16 pp.

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the status of cleanup efforts at three hazardous waste sites, provided information on progress at the sites, and discussed the lack of cost-effectiveness evaluations for remedial measures by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, since 1980, cleanup actions have taken place at the three sites, and studies are underway to determine how to complete the tasks. Although the Superfund program provides that the long-term remedies be cost effective, no standards exist as to the extent of the required cleanup. Specifically, at the Laskin/Poplar Oil Company site in Ohio, EPA has disposed of contaminated oil and water. At the LiPari Landfill site in New Jersey, EPA has constructed an underground containment wall and, at the Picillo Farm site in Rhode Island, EPA has instituted a number of cleanup strategies. However, EPA has indicated that total cleanup of the LiPari site may not be practical because contaminants continue to leak from underground containment into ground and surface waters. GAO expressed concern that standards for cost-effective cleanup have not been developed and noted that an Office of Technology Assessment study is examining the extent to which the absence of specific national standard affects the selection of cleanup technologies and whether sufficient data exist to develop such standards.

124610

EPA's Efforts To Identify and Control Harmful Chemicals in Use. RCED-84-100; B-214926. June 13, 1984. ***Released*** July 10, 1984. 55 pp. plus 1 appendix (3 pp.).

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; Sen. Robert T. Stafford, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; Sen. Jennings Randolph, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Internal Auditing Systems (0200); Intergovernmental Policies and Fiscal Relations (0400).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress; *Rep.* James J. Florio; *Sen.* Jennings Randolph; *Sen.* Robert T. Stafford.

Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) current progress in reviewing and controlling existing chemicals as mandated under the Toxic Substances Control Act. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Since 1982, EPA has begun to make progress in implementing the existing chemicals program by establishing a process for identifying, assessing, and controlling existing chemical hazards. However, the chemicals program has had low priority in relation to other activities and, since fiscal year 1981, there has been a downward trend in funding for the program. EPA has begun to make progress in implementing the existing chemicals program by establishing a process for identifying, assessing, and controlling existing chemical hazards; developing a plan for implementing the program; and establishing an existing chemicals task force to develop, monitor, and manage the program. Since the act's passage, EPA has: (1) regulated 4 chemicals; (2) identified 60 chemicals that may present an unreasonable risk and need to be evaluated; and (3) determined that 41 additional chemicals require testing. Initially, EPA did not meet the act's mandate to initiate chemical test rulemaking proceedings within 1 year because of a lack of resources, and it had not proposed test rules. Finally, EPA has designated and assessed only two chemicals for 180-day priority review because those chemicals significantly increase the risk of harm from cancer, birth defects, or gene mutations. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress may want to consider alternatives for increasing the number of chemicals considered for priority review, if Congress believes that EPA should use this provision more frequently. Congress could: (1) require EPA to designate chemicals which are known to cause cancer, gene mutations, or birth defects; (2) establish an advisory group of representatives from federal research and regulatory agencies to recommend chemicals for EPA to consider for priority review; (3) provide EPA the authority to gather additional information to properly assess a chemical's risk during review; or (4) require EPA to include in its annual reports the chemicals it considered for priority review, its decisions, and the related reasons for the decisions. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should finalize proposed test rulemaking within a reasonable time, such as a goal of 12 to 18 months after proposal. If EPA is not able to finalize test rules in a reasonable time, it should inform Congress of the delay, the reasons, and suggest solutions such as negotiated testing agreements, additional resources, or legislative changes.

124629

Assessment of New Chemical Regulation Under the Toxic Substances Control Act. RCED-84-84; B-214392. June 15, 1984. ***Released*** July 10, 1984. 46 pp. plus 3 appendices (7 pp.).

Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; Sen. David Durenberger, Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Improvement of the Regulation of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2225).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Health: Consumer and Occupational Health and Safety (554.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; European Economic Community.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *House* Committee on Foreign Affairs: Inter-American Affairs Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress; *Rep.* James J. Florio; *Sen.* David Durenberger.
Authority: Toxic Substances Control Act.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed: (1) the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) program for protecting health and the environment from the risks of new chemicals; (2) enforcement of program requirements by EPA; and (3) the differences between the EPA program and the new chemicals notification program adopted by the European Economic Community (EEC) and the potential impact of these differences on international trade. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** EPA performs premanufacture reviews to assess the potential risks of new chemicals. GAO found that the EPA reviews are limited in scope and that their assessment of risks are frequently made with considerable uncertainty as to the toxicity of the chemicals being reviewed. EPA is required to provide enforcement inspections to ensure that: (1) new chemical notifications are being submitted; (2) EPA-imposed control actions are implemented by chemical manufacturers; and (3) data required to be submitted are reliable. GAO found that not all of the planned inspections were performed because inspection resources were being diverted to other enforcement activities. In addition, GAO found that the United States and EEC have pursued different approaches to chemicals regulation. While the American system is designed to protect against chemical risks without creating economic barriers to technological innovation, the European program is designed to avoid trade barriers that might arise if the nations of EEC did not standardize their reporting requirements. The EEC program involves a notification system, with risk assessment and control decisions left primarily to member nations. Under the EEC program: (1) a standardized set of tests is required for new chemicals; (2) any chemical not on the established chemical inventory must be pretested; and (3) additional testing is required when the quantity of a new chemical being marketed reaches specified levels. GAO believes that it is too early to tell whether international trade might be affected by the differences in the two systems. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress may wish to provide EPA with additional authority to control changes in the manufacture and use of new chemicals that have undergone premanufacture review while data necessary for determining the chemical's health and environmental effects are being developed. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should establish monitoring procedures and reporting requirements for new chemicals that have undergone an EPA premanufacture notification review and have been added to the inventory of existing chemicals. Specifically, EPA should require: (1) premanufacture notification submitters to notify EPA of any significant changes in the manufacture and use of the substance described in their submission; and (2) subsequent manufacturers to notify EPA when they begin to manufacture the new substance and provide information on production volume and uses of the substance. To improve the enforceability of the new chemicals program, the Administrator, EPA, should revise the premanufacture notification regulations on what constitutes an exemption from the notification requirement by developing more specific criteria for distinguishing between research and development, test marketing, and commercial uses. EPA should provide adequate inspection resources to achieve its inspection goals in the new chemicals program. If these resources are not available because of higher priority requirements, EPA should establish the additional needs of the program and provide such information to the appropriate congressional committees for their consideration.

124659
Inspection, Enforcement, and Permitting Activities at New Jersey and Tennessee Hazardous Waste Facilities. RCED-84-7; B-214656. June 22, 1984. ***Released*** July 11, 1984. 8 pp. plus 6 appendices (42 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Refer to RCED-83-241, September 21, 1981, Accession Number 122523.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976.
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reviewed activities associated with the federal hazardous waste regulatory program and compliance under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. This report discusses how the program is being carried out in Tennessee and New Jersey and updates a prior report by identifying corrective actions the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO noted that Tennessee has administered its own inspection and enforcement program for several years, but New Jersey has only recently obtained primary inspection and enforcement authority from EPA. GAO found that 5 of the 34 New Jersey facilities and 11 of 14 Tennessee facilities were not in full compliance with the act with respect to ground water monitoring requirements. Neither state knew whether the facilities were in compliance with financial responsibility requirements regarding closure and postclosure care. In Tennessee and New Jersey, follow-up on violations was not always performed and few enforcement actions were taken. Relatively few of the estimated 7,500 facilities nationwide needing permits have been issued permits by EPA and the states. GAO noted that EPA plans to act to correct these problems.

124689
Need To Assess Federal Role in Regulating and Enforcing Pipeline Safety. RCED-84-102; B-214352. July 10, 1984. ***Released*** July 17, 1984. 69 pp. plus 6 appendices (22 pp.).
Report to Rep. Philip R. Sharp, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Transportation Systems and Policies: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (2451).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Transportation: Other Transportation (407.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Transportation; Department of Transportation: Research and Special Programs Administration: Office of Operations and Enforcement.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Transportation Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Surface Transportation Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Fossil and Synthetic Fuels Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Transportation Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation; *Rep.* Philip R. Sharp.

Authority: Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Act of 1979 (49 U.S.C. 2001). Transportation of Explosives Act (18 U.S.C. 831 et seq.). Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 (49 U.S.C. 1671). Pipeline Safety Act of 1979. 49 C.F.R. 190. H. Rept. 90-1390. H. Rept. 96-201. S. Rept. 96-182.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed federal gas and hazardous liquids pipeline safety programs. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Department of Transportation's (DOT) goal is to perform a comprehensive annual inspection of each pipeline operator under its jurisdiction. GAO found that, in 1983, DOT performed comprehensive inspections of only 24 percent of these operators. As of April 1984, DOT had 17 regional office inspectors, which GAO believes is insufficient to carry out the agency's inspection and enforcement responsibilities. State participation in pipeline inspection programs is voluntary; therefore, DOT cannot require the states to maintain their current level of inspection activity, assume responsibility for additional intrastate pipelines, or correct deficiencies in their programs. A number of pipeline facilities and commodities transported by pipeline not currently being regulated by DOT, including rural gas gathering lines, gas service lines, and hazardous liquids storage facilities, may need to be regulated depending on the severity of the associated safety problems. GAO believes that, despite current staffing and resource limitations, DOT can take actions to make its inspection activities more efficient. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Secretary of Transportation should direct the Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration, to: (1) evaluate and, if the benefits outweigh the cost, establish and implement a mandatory quality assurance program for interstate pipeline operators; (2) complete and update its inspection workload by dividing all interstate gas and liquid operators into common inspection units and by including the master meter and LP gas operators that are under its jurisdiction; and (3) require Office of Operations and Enforcement regions to expand and refine the inspection workload and activity data they maintain and report to headquarters to include, for each category of operator, the number of inspection units subject to inspection and the number of units that have been inspected one or more times during the year, and a breakout of the number of inspections performed by type of inspection. The Secretary of Transportation should direct the Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration, to improve state agency inspection activity reporting and OOE monitoring of state agency pipeline safety programs by: (1) using more performance-oriented measures to evaluate state agency actions in enforcing federal pipeline safety standards; (2) providing the regional offices with additional guidance to assure consistent interpretations of the questions on the monitoring form; (3) updating criteria used to determine the minimum level of state inspection activity, or establishing new criteria for this purpose; (4) clarifying instructions provided for data collection and reporting by state agencies; and (5) having the OOE regional offices review and advise OOE headquarters as to the probable accuracy of the program activity data at the time the state agencies submit such data and devote more time to verifying the accuracy of this data during their annual monitoring visits. The Secretary of Transportation should direct the Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration, to better define state inspector qualifications and training requirements and assist the states in obtaining the needed inspector training by: (1) identifying what knowledge and skills are necessary to conduct effective inspections of operators; (2) determining what training the state's inspection workforce needs to conduct effective inspections; and (3) working with the states to determine the most efficient and effective way for all state inspectors to obtain the identified training needs within a reasonable time period. The Secretary of Transportation should instruct the Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration, to: (1) gather and analyze the data necessary to determine whether there are sufficient hazards, involving personal injury or environmental damage, to warrant regulation of rural gas gathering lines, gas service lines, hazardous liquids storage facilities, and substances transported in liquefied form that are not presently regulated; and (2) take appropriate actions to amend the regulations and, in the case of rural gas gathering lines and gas service lines, propose the legislation needed to provide coverage of those additional pipeline facilities that warrant coverage. The Secretary of Transportation should direct the Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration, to develop and present to the congressional oversight and appropriations committees, alternatives to redefine the federal role and responsibilities for ensuring the safety of intrastate pipelines, including hazardous liquids pipelines. These alternatives should propose different combinations of responsibilities for intrastate operators not currently under a state's jurisdiction as well as defining the federal responsibility for assessing state agency programs.

124842

[Assessment of the Adequacy of the EPA Indemnification Study Required by Section 25(a) of the Toxic Substances Control Act]. RCED-84-170; B-203051. August 3, 1984. 5 pp. plus 1 enclosure (1 p.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Improvement of the Regulation of Dangerous Pesticides and Chemicals (2225).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: Congress.

Authority: Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2624). 31 U.S.C. 1304.

Abstract: Pursuant to a legislative requirement, GAO reported on the adequacy of a study by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of whether and under what conditions indemnification should be accorded any person as a result of EPA actions under federal law. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, because of delays and difficulties in conducting the study, EPA did not submit it to Congress until 5 years after it was due. GAO also found that the study provided a comprehensive examination of the legal and policy issues involved in indemnification and provided an adequate framework to assist Congress in deciding whether EPA needs new indemnification programs. GAO believes that the study adequately satisfied the requirements of the Toxic Substances Control Act. GAO advised Congress that it is reviewing indemnification under the Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

124844

Further Actions Needed To Improve Emergency Preparedness Around Nuclear Powerplants. RCED-84-43; B-213114. August 1, 1984. 59 pp. plus 13 appendices (76 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Three Mile Island Era of Nuclear Power Regulation (1604); Energy: Nuclear Power (1612).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).

Organization Concerned: Federal Emergency Management Agency; Environmental Protection Agency; Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Energy and Water Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Congress.

Authority: P.L. 97-415. S. 1395 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO reported on the adequacy of federal, state, and local offsite emergency planning and preparedness for mitigating the consequences of a nuclear powerplant accident. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO concluded that, although progress has been made since the Three Mile Island accident in 1979, more can and should be done. GAO found that state and local emergency preparedness plans have been developed and tested for all 54 operating nuclear powerplant sites, and 24 of these have met the federal criteria and have been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The reasons that the remaining plans have not been approved relate to their not meeting federal criteria, some local communities not fully participating in the emergency planning process, and the difficulty some state and local governments have experienced in obtaining funding for emergency planning and preparedness. In addition, GAO found that improvements are needed in the exercises conducted to test the adequacy of state and local planning and preparedness. FEMA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) rely on states and utilities to plan preparedness tests, but FEMA does not verify the compliance of preparedness plans with federal criteria, and it does not have an agencywide tracing system for ensuring that deficiencies are identified. Finally, GAO found that agencies need to provide better guidance to state and local governments for developing state and local emergency preparedness plans, and that the federal response plan for nuclear powerplant emergencies can be improved by providing for more centralized federal agency control and coordination. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress may wish to consider whether stronger central control of the federal response to a nuclear powerplant emergency is needed to improve federal coordination in such an emergency. If such central control is to be established, any proposed legislation would need to designate a federal agency to exercise the control. The proposed legislation should also provide the controlling agency the authority to require periodic exercises of the federal response plan in each region in conjunction with state and local exercises. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Director, FEMA, and the Chairman, NRC, should undertake a comprehensive reassessment of their agreement covering state and local emergency planning and preparedness. The reassessment should identify one procedure and the requirements necessary for making consistent findings on offsite emergency planning and preparedness. The Director, FEMA, should, in consultation with states, develop minimum requirements for exercise scenarios and identify which elements of the federal criteria are most important and must be given priority in exercises. The Director, FEMA, should develop and implement a program for verifying compliance with elements in the federal emergency preparedness criteria that are not tested in exercises. The Director, FEMA, should implement, once developed, an agencywide system for tracking all deficiencies identified in exercises until corrected. The Director, FEMA, should improve the process for reporting exercise results so states receive exercise evaluations in a more timely manner and for obtaining schedules of corrective action from the states by ensuring that recently issued guidance is effectively implemented. The Director, FEMA, should issue final guidance for evaluating public alert and notification. The Director, FEMA, and the Chairman, NRC, should prepare scenarios for exercises of state and local plans as required by their regulations. However, if FEMA develops minimum requirements for exercise scenarios, as recommended, this should improve the scenarios prepared by states and utilities and could eliminate the need for FEMA and NRC to prepare scenarios. Under these circumstances, if states and utilities are allowed to continue preparing exercise scenarios, the Director, FEMA, and the Chairman, NRC, should develop procedures to receive and review them in a timely manner to ensure that they meet minimum requirements. The Director, FEMA, and the Chairman, NRC, should undertake a comprehensive reassessment of their agreement covering state and local emergency planning and preparedness. The reassessment should establish and implement controls to ensure that NRC receives periodic status reports on the outstanding deficiencies in each offsite plan and exercise. The Director, FEMA, should work through the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee to develop guidance for assessing public education in the 10-mile emergency planning zone of nuclear plants. The Director, FEMA, should work through the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee to develop definitive federal guidance on potassium iodide use. The Director, FEMA, should work through the Federal Radiologicial Preparedness Coordinating Committee to update and expand guidance on using radiation measurement instruments and interpreting the information obtained. The Director, FEMA, should work through the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee to improve existing radiological emergency training for state and local officials.

124874

Private Mineral Rights Complicate the Management of Eastern Wilderness Areas. RCED-84-101; B-211306. July 26, 1984. 27 pp. plus 6 appendices (21 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Management of Federal Energy Lands (1608); Land Use Planning and Control: More Effective and Efficient Management of Federally Owned Lands To Meet Competing Demands and Preserve Natural Resources (2323).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Conservation and Land Management (302.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Interior; Forest Service; Department of Agriculture.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Agriculture: Conservation, Credit, and Rural Development Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: Agriculture and Related Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Soil and Water Conservation Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Congress; *Sen.* James A. McClure.

Authority: Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (National) (P.L. 91-180). Wilderness Act (P.L. 88-577). Land Policy and Management Act. Weeks Act (Protection of Watersheds). P.L. 97-466. P.L. 93-622.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO studied the problems associated with private mineral rights for wilderness areas in the eastern United States. While the government has some regulatory control over mineral resource development in wilderness areas, it cannot deny the development of private mineral rights. However, such development conflicts with the legislation that created the National Wilderness Preservation System. That legislation restricted activities in wilderness areas to recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, historical, and conservation uses by the public. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that the Forest Service, which manages wilderness areas, has experienced problems resulting from the possible development of private mineral rights in four wilderness areas and one potential wilderness area in the eastern United States. In one wilderness area, the owner of mineral rights for the area submitted a plan to mine coal. The Forest Service determined that such mining could be destructive to the area, and attempted to acquire the mineral rights. However, the owner and the Forest Service could not agree on a price for the rights, and the Forest Service believes that it must allow mining. Based on this and other such experiences, GAO and the Forest Service believe that such problems could increase because the Forest Service cannot legally prevent mineral development and Congress is unlikely to appropriate funds to acquire mineral rights for more wilderness areas. GAO also found that, in 1979, the Forest Service submitted recommendations to Congress regarding expansion of the wilderness system. However, the Forest Service did not consider the problems associated with private mineral rights for proposed wilderness areas. The Forest Service is currently reevaluating its wilderness recommendations. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Before Congress enacts legislation to create additional eastern wilderness areas, it may wish to: (1) consider the extent and development potential of private mineral rights in these areas; and (2) specify whether the Forest Service should acquire mineral rights or allow mining in wilderness areas. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** Because the Forest Service did not analyze the potential problems or costs associated with private mineral rights when it developed its 1979 wilderness recommendations, the Secretary of Agriculture should direct the Forest Service's southern and eastern regional offices to perform this type of analysis when evaluating the wilderness recommendations. This analysis should include for each area consideration of private mineral development potential, the government's ability to control mineral development if it occurs, the need to acquire private mineral rights, and a range of estimated acquisition costs.

124974

EPA's Innovative Technology Program for Waste Water Treatment Needs Better Controls. RCED-84-79; B-200800. August 20, 1984. 30 pp. plus 2 appendices (22 pp.).

Report to William D. Ruckelshaus, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effective Implementation of Water Pollution Control Activities and Programs (2222).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Water Resources (301.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-217).

Abstract: GAO discussed the need for better controls in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) innovative technology program for wastewater treatment. The program has significant potential to improve wastewater treatment technology and can reduce expenditures for energy, construction, and operation of future projects. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that EPA awarded $20.2 million to questionable projects and $7.3 million to projects which could not be assessed for innovative sewage treatment technologies. Further, project engineers in two of the three regions reviewed by GAO generally did not ensure that projects were innovative. GAO concluded that, although the program was designed to break down barriers hindering development of innovative technology in wastewater treatment, the program has had limited success. The program does not provide sufficient incentives for consulting engineers and states to take the risk or incur the additional cost of developing innovative projects. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** The Administrator, EPA, should, to help ensure that the objectives of the innovative technology program are achieved, determine the extent to which all EPA regions are ensuring that projects are technologically innovative. The Administrator, EPA, should direct regional administrators to establish procedures which will help ensure that the factors constituting technological risk are identified and evaluated. The procedures should include having the regional administrator: (1) independently verify that all proposed innovative projects are thoroughly and systematically evaluated for technological risk including projects proposed under regional discretion authority; (2) send all innovative project requests to the Cincinnati technical support group for review; unless actions to the contrary are appropriately justified, the regions should be required to follow the support group's recommendations; and (3) provide a written explanation of the basis for each innovative decision including the evaluation of risk and potential benefits and actions taken on the technical support group's recommendations. The Administrator, EPA, should establish a targeted demonstration program for potential innovative technologies. EPA should examine the possibility of using funds from other EPA programs or, if funds are not available, EPA should prepare a justification for additional funds and provide such information to the appropriate congressional committees for their consideration.

125069

The Steel Industry Compliance Extension Act Brought About Some Modernization and Unexpected Benefits. RCED-84-103; B-214430. September 5, 1984. 21 pp. plus 4 appendices (9 pp.).

Report to Congress; by Milton J. Socolar, Acting Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; Congress.

Authority: Steel Industry Compliance Extension Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 7401). Clean Air Act. Clean Water Act of 1977. H.R. 5252 (97th Cong.). S. 431 (98th Cong.). S. 432 (98th Cong.). S. 1736 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO assessed the impact of the Steel Industry Compliance Extension Act, which allowed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to defer, for approved steel companies, the date for meeting air pollution requirements. To approve a company under the act, EPA had to: (1) determine that the deferral of air pollution control spending was necessary to improve the efficiency of company facilities; (2) find that the company would spend on modernization an amount equal to the amount of air pollution control spending deferred; (3) reach agreement with the company for a judicial consent decree to ensure that company facilities would comply with federal law; (4) find that the company had sufficient funds to comply with federal law; and (5) determine that approval of the company would not degrade air quality during the compliance extension. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that 10 companies representing about 50 percent of U.S. steel production applied for benefits under the act. EPA determined that six of the applicants were eligible to participate in the program, and GAO found that the five firms that participated spent about $49 million on modernization. GAO noted that, while spending under the program was less than expected, unexpected benefits that were realized included: (1) one corporation's sharing of a proprietary emission control process with other firms in the steel industry; and (2) an increased number of consent decrees, which EPA prefers over other compliance mechanisms. GAO also found factors that limited eligibility for benefits under the act. While the act provided that firms applying for benefits were required to comply with existing judicial decrees, it also provided that de minimis, or negligible, violations could be excused. However, the act did not define de minimis violations and EPA eventually used a strict interpretation of such violations. In addition, GAO found that companies' spending under the act was limited by: (1) EPA or corporate determinations that funds were not eligible to be diverted to modernization; (2) overestimated spending commitments; (3) proposed pollution control projects that were either ineligible under the act or were not necessary; and (4) poor economic conditions, which limited companies' willingness to divert pollution control funds to modernization. ***Recommendation To Congress:*** Congress should, in considering any future legislation which extends pollution control or other regulatory compliance deadlines, specifically define the criteria that EPA or other agencies should use to determine program eligibility.

125179

[National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Compliance by Major Industrial Dischargers in Louisiana]. September 19, 1984. 11 pp. plus 4 appendices (4 pp.).

Testimony before the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Water Act of 1977. H.R. 3282 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: GAO discussed how well certain major industrial dischargers in Louisiana have been complying with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits, the principal means of controlling the nation's water pollution. GAO noted that: (1) permit noncompliance over a 45-month period was frequent and extensive; (2) compliance reporting to top Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) management does not fully disclose the frequency and severity of noncompliance problems; and (3) the EPA region's enforcement actions have little impact on abating noncompliance. Further, EPA reporting of only those dischargers that are in significant noncompliance with permit conditions incorrectly indicates that the noncompliance problem is not widespread. GAO concluded that noncompliance is widespread and frequent for both major municipal and industrial dischargers.

125220

[GAO's Review of Federal Efforts To Reduce Asbestos Hazards in Schools]. September 26, 1984. 4 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Hugh J. Wessinger, Senior Associate Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee.

Authority: Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act of 1980. Toxic Substances Control Act.

Abstract: GAO discussed federal efforts to reduce asbestos hazards in schools and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to address the potential health risk of asbestos-containing materials in schools built or renovated between 1946 and 1972. GAO previously reported that the lack of definite federal criteria has resulted in states and localities using different criteria in arriving at the cleanup decisions. Until EPA develops more specific criteria about when asbestos poses a serious problem requiring abatement actions, school officials may continue to overreact and spend money needlessly or underreact and expose school occupants to hazardous conditions. EPA conducted research on the asbestos issue to to validate a quantitative measure for assessing asbestos exposure and to issue guidance based on this measure. GAO noted, however, that the measure has been shown to be an unreliable indicator of asbestos exposure. GAO concluded that the decision as to whether the presence of these hazardous materials presents a significant risk in individual schools will continue to be a highly subjective decision for local school districts.

125277

[EPA's Development of the Carbon Monoxide Standards]. October 1, 1984. 10 pp.

Testimony before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Veterans Administration; Food and Drug Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Authority: Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977.

Abstract: GAO discussed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) development of air quality standards for carbon monoxide, focusing on: (1) research used by EPA to support the standards it developed; and (2) how communication between EPA, the Veterans Administration (VA), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) affected the development of the standards. GAO stated that, while there was some doubt about the validity of some early studies on which EPA based the standards, EPA did not change the standards because other studies, conducted by a VA researcher, indicated that carbon monoxide adversely affected people with certain cardiovascular conditions. EPA later discovered that the researcher was investigated by FDA for alleged falsification of research results. The doubt cast upon the researcher's work by this investigation left EPA with only one study that supported its carbon monoxide standards. EPA concluded, however, that the study adequately supported proposed revisions to the standards, and it proposed such revisions. GAO also stated that VA never notified EPA about the investigation of the researcher; however, FDA later notified EPA of the investigation. VA officials stated that they did not notify EPA of the investigation because they considered it an internal personnel matter. EPA officials told GAO that, had they known about the investigation earlier, they would have reexamined the data base supporting the carbon monoxide standards. GAO believes that: (1) VA erred in not notifying EPA of the investigation; and (2) EPA can avoid similar problems in the future by ensuring that key research is replicated or otherwise verified.

125311

Status of EPA's Air Quality Standards for Carbon Monoxide. RCED-84-201; B-216003. September 27, 1984. 33 pp. plus 2 appendices (7 pp.).

Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227); Health Programs: Improving the Management and Efficiency of Federally Sponsored Health Research (1232).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); Health: Health Research (552.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Veterans Administration; Food and Drug Administration.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO provided information on: (1) the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) development of the carbon monoxide standard and the research supporting the present standard; and (2) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Veterans Administration (VA) reviews and investigations of research conducted by a VA physician and how these agencies communicated the results of their investigations to EPA. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** In 1971, carbon monoxide standards were established on the basis of a study which suggested that low-level carbon monoxide exposure would affect the central nervous system. Subsequently, questions were raised about the study's reliability. While EPA recognized the limitations of the study, it took no action to change the standards because new studies, including one by a VA physician, showed that the standards were needed to protect persons with certain heart conditions. In 1983, EPA postponed the issuance of revised standards based on these studies because questions arose concerning the validity of the VA study. In 1979, FDA began an investigation of the questioned study and found that the physician had used incorrect patient selection, conflicting data, and possible falsification of records. As a result of this investigation, the physician's research activities were discontinued. However, GAO could find no indication that VA had notified EPA of the physician's research problems, and FDA did not notify EPA of its investigation until 1982, after EPA had begun using the results of the VA study as a basis for the revised standards. Although EPA believes that the questioned study and three others provide a sufficient scientific basis to support a regulatory decision, it is sponsoring research to duplicate the studies. EPA officials stated that, had they received earlier notification of the physician's research problems, they would have been able to review his research and would have begun earlier to reexamine the data base supporting the standards.

125314

[Natural Resource Damage Claims and Assessment Regulations Under Superfund]. RCED-84-196; B-216105. September 4, 1984. *Released* October 4, 1984. 10 pp.

Report to Sen. Max S. Baucus, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of the Interior.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee; *Sen.* Max S. Baucus.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510). Executive Order 12316. Executive Order 12286. H.R. 2867 (98th Cong.).

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the implementation of the natural resource damage claims provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, commonly known as Superfund. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** Under the act, federal and state trustees of natural resources may submit claims against Superfund for reimbursement for injury to or destruction or loss of natural resources caused by release of hazardous substances. A trust fund to be accumulated between fiscal years 1981 and 1985 is to be used to finance cleanup activities and to pay any allowed claims. The Department of the Interior has been delegated the authority to develop regulations on conducting natural resource damage assessments which, together with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations, have the purpose of establishing a mechanism for trustees to seek compensation for damages to natural resources. GAO found that, as of August 1984, Interior had not proposed or developed the regulations. Interior cited various reasons for the delay in issuing its regulations including a lack of resources and information and other priorities. GAO found that EPA disallowed 57 claims submitted by four states in 1983 to recover $2.7 billion for damages to natural resources. Officials in seven states contacted by GAO disagreed with the basis for the EPA invalidation of the claims and stated that Interior's regulations should have been issued to help guide the states in filing their claims. Further, attorneys in the seven states stated their belief that Interior's failure to issue the assessment regulations will be a serious obstacle to the states' present and future litigation. GAO stated that EPA and Interior have recently acted to expedite the development of their respective regulations.

125338

Status of Civilian Federal Agencies' Efforts To Address Hazardous Waste Problems on Their Lands. RCED-84-188; B-215824. September 28, 1984. 42 pp. plus 20 appendices (62 pp.).

Report to Rep. Vic Fazio, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations: Legislative Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation; *House* Committee on Appropriations: Legislative Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* Vic Fazio.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980. Water Pollution Control Act. Clean Air Act. Executive Order 12088. Executive Order 12316. OMB Circular A-106.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO determined: (1) what actions have been taken by federal civilian agencies to comply with provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) which require them to identify federal sites which potentially contain hazardous wastes; and (2) the status of ongoing and planned agency actions to assess and correct hazardous waste problems at federal sites. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO identified 16 federal agencies involved in hazardous waste activities. The agencies had identified 340 locations with potential hazardous waste problems. Some locations were identified in response to a CERCLA reporting requirement, although identification of sites was hampered because: (1) some agencies were unaware of the reporting requirement; (2) guidance issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) left agencies with broad discretion in meeting the requirement; and (3) there was no requirement for EPA to evaluate the adequacy of agency reporting actions. GAO found that about 30 percent of the 340 identified locations had not been assessed, but that for the remainder, some action had been taken. In 73 cases, EPA or the responsible agency determined that no further action was warranted. GAO also found that seven federal agencies have initiatives underway to identify hazardous waste sites. In addition, GAO found that an EPA inventory of potential hazardous waste sites is incomplete and contains errors, which could adversely affect a new EPA strategy for ensuring that agencies comply with CERCLA requirements. *Recommendation To Agencies:* The Administrator, EPA, should instruct EPA regional offices on the importance and need for complete and accurate information on potential hazardous waste site locations on federal lands. The instructions should also require regional offices to update and correct the ERRIS data base to show which locations are on federal lands and clearly identify within the data base those locations on federal lands that have been shown to lack the potential for uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The Administrator, EPA, should require EPA regional offices to update and correct the ERRIS data base to show the current status of site assessment, evaluation, and corrective actions that have been taken at federal agency locations.

125391
HHS' Implementation of Superfund Health-Related Responsibilities. HRD-84-62; B-207182. September 28, 1984. ***Released*** October 16, 1984. 28 pp. plus 2 appendices (4 pp.).
Report to Rep. James J. Florio, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Health Programs: Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federally Supported Prevention and Treatment Efforts in Controlling Disease, Illness, and Substance Abuse (1230); Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Federal and State Programs in Reducing the Environmental and Health Dangers Posed by Hazardous and Solid Wastes (2221).
Contact: Human Resources Division.
Budget Function: Health: Prevention and Control of Health Problems (551.2); Natural Resources and Environment: Other Natural Resources (306.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Health and Human Services; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works: Toxic Substances and Environmental Oversight Subcommittee; Congress; *Rep.* James J. Florio.
Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-510). Urgent Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1982. Executive Order 12316.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO determined the extent to which the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been carrying out its responsibilities under the Superfund program. HHS responsibilities under Superfund include: (1) information collection, analysis, and management; (2) provision of medical services including care, testing, and research; and (3) development of standards to protect hazardous waste workers. *Findings/Conclusions:* GAO found that HHS: (1) is developing plans to establish three required registries of hazardous substance-related diseases, but has not developed a registry of persons exposed to toxic substances; (2) is planning to upgrade its inventory of information on the health effects of hazardous substances, but has not because of funding decreases; (3) has contracted for the development of a complete registry of areas closed due to contamination by toxic substances; (4) has conducted some biological testing at emergency sites; (5) has several studies in progress regarding the health effects of hazardous substances, but had only completed one such study since Superfund's implementation; and (6) has experienced delays in the establishment of safety standards for hazardous waste workers. In addition, GAO found that HHS has made limited progress with Superfund implementation because of: (1) funding delays and reductions by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which coordinates the Superfund budget; and (2) staffing limitations within HHS. *Recommendation To Congress:* As Congress deliberates the future of Superfund, particularly the health-related responsibilities of HHS, it may wish to consider the workability of the existing arrangement whereby EPA controls HHS funding levels and whether additional staff positions should be authorized for HHS activities to avert past situations were HHS had inadequate funds or staff to carry out its plans. If Congress considers the HHS interpretations of its role under the act to be inconsistent with congressional intent, it may wish to: (1) clarify the purpose and intent of the national exposure and disease registries and the types of information to be included; (2) clarify the extent to which medical care is to be provided; and (3) define such terms as "exposed individuals" and "public health emergencies."

125392
EPA Needs To Improve Its Oversight of Air Pollution Control Grant Expenditures. RCED-84-163; B-209872. September 28, 1984. ***Released*** October 11, 1984. 22 pp.
Report to Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Environmental Protection Programs: Effectiveness of Environmental Protection Regulatory Strategies and Their Balance With Other Priorities (2227).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Maryland; Louisiana; District of Columbia; Texas.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Environment and Public Works; *Rep.* John D. Dingell.

Authority: Clean Air Act. 40 C.F.R. 35.501-8. 40 C.F.R. 30.635-3. 40 C.F.R. 35.415. OMB Circular A-102 Attach. P.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) air pollution control grant program authorized by the Clean Air Act. *Findings/Conclusions:* Section 105 of the act authorizes EPA to award grants to state and local agencies to develop plans and implement programs to prevent and control air pollution or to address national air quality standards. GAO examined the EPA procedures for ensuring grantee compliance with section 105 provisions and EPA regulations and reviewed whether grantees are, in fact, meeting these requirements. GAO found that the three EPA regions reviewed were consulting with state officials and were satisfied that grantees were using the federal funds to supplement, not supplant, nonfederal funds for air pollution control. However, two of the regions had not ensured that all grantees complied with the level-of-effort requirement of the act or with EPA reporting requirements. GAO found numerous instances where unliquidated obligations were reported in final financial reports, in violation of reporting instructions. Of six grantees reviewed within the three EPA regions, four had submitted inaccurate or incomplete financial reports. Inspector General officials stated that they do not have the resources to audit the grantees' financial reports, and grant program officials stated that they lack the resources as well as the expertise to perform such audits. *Recommendation To Agencies:* To ensure that all EPA regions determine whether grantees are complying with the level-of-effort requirement of the section 105 grant program, the Administrator, EPA, should establish procedures for regional administrators to follow in monitoring grantee expenditures. The procedures should emphasize that all obligations must be liquidated before financial reports can be accepted by EPA as final and should require the regions to examine grantees' past financial reports to ensure that levels of effort are maintained. The Administrator, EPA, should ensure that the regional administrators in Regions IV and VI take appropriate action with respect to the grantees in Knox County and San Antonio, respectively, concerning their reductions in levels of effort. To ensure that section 105 grant funds are properly spent and/or reported, the Administrator, EPA, should direct the regional administrators in Regions III and IV to work with the Office of General Counsel to resolve the underreporting of expenditures in Maryland and Louisiana. The Inspector General, EPA, should reconsider the priority assigned to the section 105 grant program, based on the GAO review findings and, if appropriate, conduct audits of specific grants to determine whether grantees' financial reports to EPA contain accurate and reliable information. To ensure that section 105 grant funds are properly spent and/or reported, the Administrator, EPA, should direct the regional administrators in Regions III and VI to work with the District of Columbia and Texas, respectively, to resolve inappropriate spending or erroneous reporting of grant funds in fiscal year 1982.

125544

Status of DOE Implementation of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 as of September 30, 1984. RCED-85-42; B-202377. October 19, 1984. 27 pp. plus 2 appendices (7 pp.).

Report to Sen. James A. McClure, Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; by Ralph V. Carlone, (for J. Dexter Peach, Director), GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Refer to Testimony, March 21, 1985, Accession Number 126494.

Issue Area: Energy: Effectiveness and Efficiency of DOE Implementation of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (6404); Environment: Other Issue Area Work (6891).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Energy: Energy Information, Policy, and Regulation (276.0).

Organization Concerned: Department of Energy: Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

Congressional Relevance: *Senate* Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; *Sen.* J. Bennett Johnston; *Sen.* James A. McClure.

Authority: Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-425).

Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO reported on: (1) the progress which the Department of Energy (DOE) is making in meeting deadlines legislated by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act; (2) the status of the Nuclear Waste Fund; and (3) DOE management reorganization, information system development, and personnel initiatives. *Findings/Conclusions:* The act established several program requirements and set deadlines for DOE to develop and construct waste disposal repositories. During the last quarter of fiscal year 1984, DOE focused on: (1) developing a mission plan to be issued in early 1985; (2) preparing final guidelines for use in evaluation of potential repository sites to be issued in November 1984; and (3) completing environmental assessments for the sites for release in December 1984. While DOE made progress toward accomplishing each of these requirements, in each case the initial milestone was missed to allow for full participation by states, Indian tribes, and the public. In July 1984, DOE issued an annual report on the adequacy of user fees established under the act. In August 1984, DOE distributed a draft report recommending that commercial and defense waste be deposited in a single repository to reduce the costs of nuclear waste disposal. By January 1985, DOE expects to issue a report on alternative approaches to managing the waste program. During the last quarter of fiscal year 1984, DOE reorganized the Waste Office to centralize policy development, initiated an internal program management system to include an automated information system, issued guidelines to standardize its state assistance program, awarded a contract for the audit of the Nuclear Waste Fund, and hired additional staff. As of September 30. 1984, DOE had executed contracts with each of the anticipated users of waste disposal and, while none of the one-time fees had been paid, about $73.6 million was paid because of a 1-mill fee.

125776

Department of Energy Acting To Control Hazardous Wastes at Its Savannah River Nuclear Facilities. RCED-85-23; B-216332. November 21, 1984. ***Released*** December 4, 1984. 33 pp. plus 3 appendices (5 pp.).

Report to Sen. Ernest F. Hollings; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Energy: Other Issue Area Work (6491); Environment: Other Issue Area Work (6891).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: National Defense: Atomic Energy Defense Activities (053.0); Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).
Organization Concerned: Department of Energy: Savannah Nuclear Power Station; Environmental Protection Agency.
Congressional Relevance: *Sen.* Ernest F. Hollings.
Authority: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980. Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1984 (P.L. 98-181). Clean Water Act of 1977. Energy and Water Development Appropriation Act, 1984 (P.L. 98-50).
Abstract: In response to a congressional request, GAO evaluated efforts to control and clean up ground water contamination from hazardous wastes at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River plant. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** The Savannah River plant produces nuclear materials for the nation's defense program and, since 1952, the on-site contractor has disposed of large amounts of radioactive and nonradioactive wastes within the plant's boundaries. In 1981, the contractor discovered that the ground water underlying the seepage basin serving the plant's fuel fabrication facilities, known as the M-area, is contaminated with suspected carcinogens. GAO found that, while wastes discarded in the M-area have contaminated ground water in the immediate vicinity, to date they have had no impact outside the plant's boundaries. However, tests have shown concentrations of suspected carcinogens which exceed existing DOE drinking water, not ground water, quality standards in M-area ground water above an aquifer which provides drinking water to much of the Southeast. Since discovery of the M-area contamination, DOE and the contractor have taken steps to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the seepage basin and have initiated a 20-year plan to remove the solvents already in the underlying ground water. The contractor has also initiated efforts to identify all waste disposal sites at the plant; however, for many of the sites, accurate records on the types and quantities of wastes disposed of have not been required or maintained. DOE has entered into formal agreements with the Environmental Protection Agency and the State of South Carolina to increase coordination on nonradioactive waste disposal matters at the plant.

125835
An Analysis of Issues Concerning "Acid Rain". RCED-85-13; B-209020. December 11, 1984. 124 pp. plus 5 appendices (61 pp.).
Report to Congress; by Charles A. Bowsher, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Energy: Other Issue Area Work (6491); Environment: Overview of Success and Shortcomings of Federal and State Efforts To Control Toxic Air Pollutants (6805); International Affairs: Non-Line-of-Effort Assignments (0651).
Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.
Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0); International Affairs: Conduct of Foreign Affairs (153.0); Energy: Energy Supply (271.0).
Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Energy; Council on Environmental Quality; Department of State.
Congressional Relevance: Congress.
Authority: Acid Precipitation Act of 1980. Clean Air Act. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970. Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. S. 3041 (97th Cong.). H.R. 3400 (98th Cong.). S. 1706 (97th Cong.). S. 768 (98th Cong.). S. 2594 (97th Cong.). S. 2215 (98th Cong.). S. 2001 (98th Cong.). S. 454 (98th Cong.). S. 766 (98th Cong.). H.R. 1405 (98th Cong.). H.R. 3904 (98th Cong.).
Abstract: GAO examined the issues involved in the decision on controlling acid deposition, or acid rain. GAO also examined: (1) whether available scientific information could indicate clearly the appropriateness of beginning control action; and (2) the current state of knowledge on the subject. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, because the Clean Air Act currently focuses on concentrations of pollutants near their sources, any air pollution control approach to deal with acid rain in this century would necessitate additions to, or a basic reorientation of, the ambient air quality standard approach in the present act. The dispute persists over whether it would be advisable to establish emission controls promptly to reduce acid rain or wait further. GAO believes that having control plans ready could save time, and therefore spare resources, in the event a need for rapid action becomes evident. GAO concluded that, regardless of decisions that are made to control acid rain in the short run, further scientific work will be needed for a number of years.

125843
[Hazardous Waste Management at Tinker Air Force Base]. December 13, 1984. 14 pp.
Testimony before the House Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; by Harry R. Finley, Associate Director, GAO National Security and International Affairs Division.

Contact: National Security and International Affairs Division.
Organization Concerned: Department of the Air Force: Tinker AFB, OK.
Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Government Operations: Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee; *Rep.* Michael L. Synar.
Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO discussed its review of hazardous waste management at an Air Force base in Oklahoma concerning the following areas: (1) reducing hazardous waste generation through treatment and recycling; (2) problems associated with the full and effective utilization of an industrial waste treatment plant; and (3) improvements which are needed in the monitoring and control of hazardous waste disposal. GAO found that the Air Force base was: (1) disposing of much of its hazardous wastes off-base without treating or recycling them; and (2) disposing, in injection wells, waste chemicals that could be treated at its industrial waste treatment plant. GAO commented on the problems that the industrial waste treatment plant has, including operational and maintenance problems, and noted that the base has taken several actions to correct these problems. GAO also determined that: (1) better monitoring and inspection of the base hazardous waste contractor and hazardous waste manifests are needed; (2) better spill containment is needed to prevent dumping at the base; and (3) the base and the Department of Defense need to be more involved in the selection of hazardous waste disposal sites.

125938
EPA Could Benefit From Comprehensive Management Information on Superfund Enforcement Actions. RCED-85-3; B-211463. December 28, 1984. 15 pp.
Report to Rep. Elliott H. Levitas, Chairman, House Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; by J. Dexter Peach, Director, GAO Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Issue Area: Environment: Assessing EPA's Initial Efforts To Address Problems Posed by Past Hazardous Waste Disposal Practices (6801).

Contact: Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division.

Budget Function: Natural Resources and Environment: Pollution Control and Abatement (304.0).

Organization Concerned: Environmental Protection Agency.

Congressional Relevance: *House* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Energy and Commerce: Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism Subcommittee; *House* Committee on Public Works and Transportation: Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee; *Senate* Committee on Appropriations: HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee; *Rep.* Elliott H. Levitas.

Authority: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980.

Abstract: Pursuant to a congressional request, GAO reviewed the extent of management information available to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in carrying out its enforcement responsibilities under the Superfund program. ***Findings/Conclusions:*** GAO found that, while EPA headquarters and regional offices have individual management information systems for tracking Superfund enforcement actions, there is no such system that covers the entire agency. Most such systems were developed in recent years as the growing Superfund caseload prompted program managers to develop systematic ways of tracking enforcement actions. Many EPA officials believe that, if the Superfund enforcement caseload continues to increase as expected, an agencywide information system could enable program managers to better address comprehensive Superfund issues such as the length of the enforcement process, whether enforcement milestones are met, and resource allocation. However, EPA has not assessed the feasibility of implementing a comprehensive Superfund enforcement tracking system. ***Recommendation To Agencies:*** In view of the growing enforcement workload, the Administrator of EPA should assess the feasibility of developing and maintaining a comprehensive Superfund enforcement management information system and, if cost effective, implement such a system. In making this assessment, the Administrator should consider the needs of EPA program managers and Congress.

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ABBREVIATIONS
COMMONLY USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

In general, the abbreviations used in this publication follow the recommended practices of the ***U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual.*** However, the abbreviations used in the Law/Authority Index follow the recommended rules for abbreviations cited in the latest edition of ***A Uniform System of Citation***. The following list includes only those abbreviations that do not coincide with the rules cited in the ***U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual*** or ***A Uniform System of Citation***.

A.F.R.	Air Force Regulation
A.R.	Army Regulation
A.S.P.R.	Armed Services Procurement Regulation
C.G.	Coast Guard
C.M.M.I.	Civilian Manpower Management Instruction
C.P.R.	Army Civilian Personnel Regulation
D.A.C.	Defense Acquisition Circular
D.A.R.	Defense Acquisition Regulation (formerly A.S.P.R.)
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DODPM	Department of Defense Military Pay and Allowances Entitlements Manual
DOJ	Department of Justice
D.P.C.	Defense Procurement Circular
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FIPS	Federal Information Processing Standards
FIRMR	Federal Information Resources Management Regulation
F.L.R.C.	Federal Labor Relations Council
F.P.M.	Federal Personnel Manual
F.P.M.R.	Federal Personnel Management Regulation
F.P.R.	Federal Procurement Regulation
F.T.R.	Federal Travel Regulation
IAM	Indian Affairs Manual
J.T.R.	Joint Travel Regulation
NAVJAGMAN	Manual of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy
NAVSEAOP	Naval Sea Systems Command Ordnance Publications
N.M.F.C.	National Motor Freight Classification
VAPR	Veterans Administration Procurement Regulation

GAO Division and Office Abbreviations

AFMD[3]	Accounting and Financial Management Division
CED[1]	Community and Economic Development Division
EMD[1]	Energy and Minerals Division
FOD	Field Operations Division
FPCD	Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
GGD	General Government Division
HRD	Human Resources Division
ID[2]	International Division
IMTEC[3]	Information Management and Technology Division
IPE[5]	Institute for Program Evaluation
LCD[3]	Logistics and Communications Division
MASAD[2]	Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division
NSIAD[2]	National Security and International Affairs Division
OACG	Office of the Assistant Comptroller General
OADPS[4]	Office of Automatic and Data Processing Services
OCG	Office of the Comptroller General
OCR	Office of Congressional Relations
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
OIRM	Office of Information Resources Management
OISS[4]	Office of Information Systems and Services
OLS	Office of Library Services
OP	Office of Policy
OPP	Office of Program Planning
PAD[5]	Program Analysis Division
PART[6]	Professional Audit Review Team
PEMD[5]	Program Evaluation and Methodology Division
PLRD[2]	Procurement, Logistics, and Readiness Division
PSAD	Procurement and Systems Acquisition Division
RCED[1]	Resources, Community, and Economic Development Division

[1] **CED** and **EMD** were merged to form **RCED** in October 1982.

[2] **ID**, **MASAD**, and **PLRD** were merged to form **NSIAD** in May 1983.

[3] Part of **AFMD** and all of **LCD** were merged to form **IMTEC** in October 1983.

[4] Now **OIRM**.

[5] **IPE** and **PAD** merged to form **PEMD**.

[6] Special-study group.